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SCREENS AND YOUR KIDS: how to find balance

THE MOST RELAXING SUMMER

Shortcuts and strategies to help you kick back and ENJOY

FEATURING:

32 potluck recipes + tips

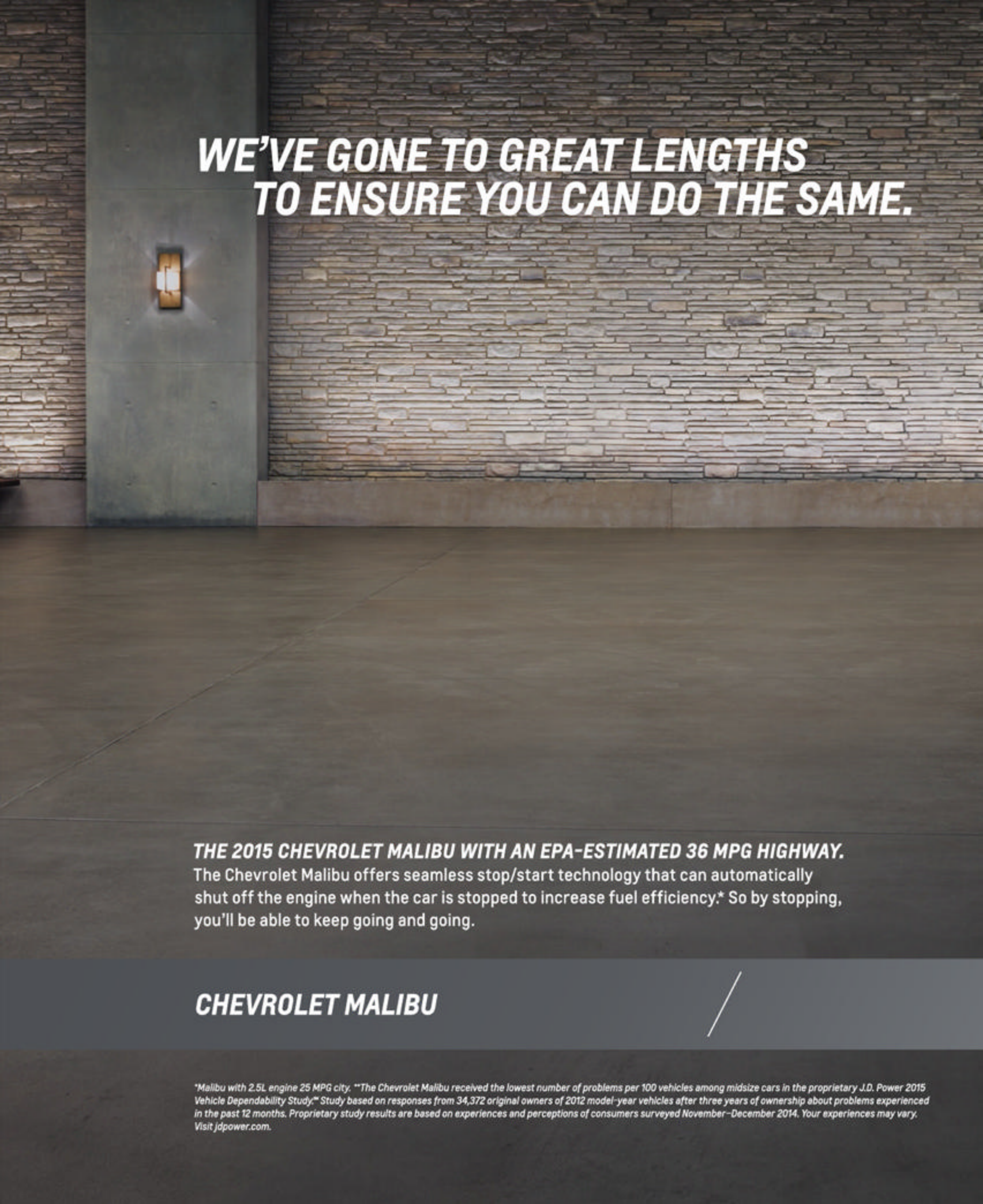
family vacations without the bickering

100 style finds under $100

weird pet behavior, explained

+

WHAT'S THE SECRET TO THESE DELICIOUS SCOOPS? SEE OUR ROAD TEST ON PAGE 167



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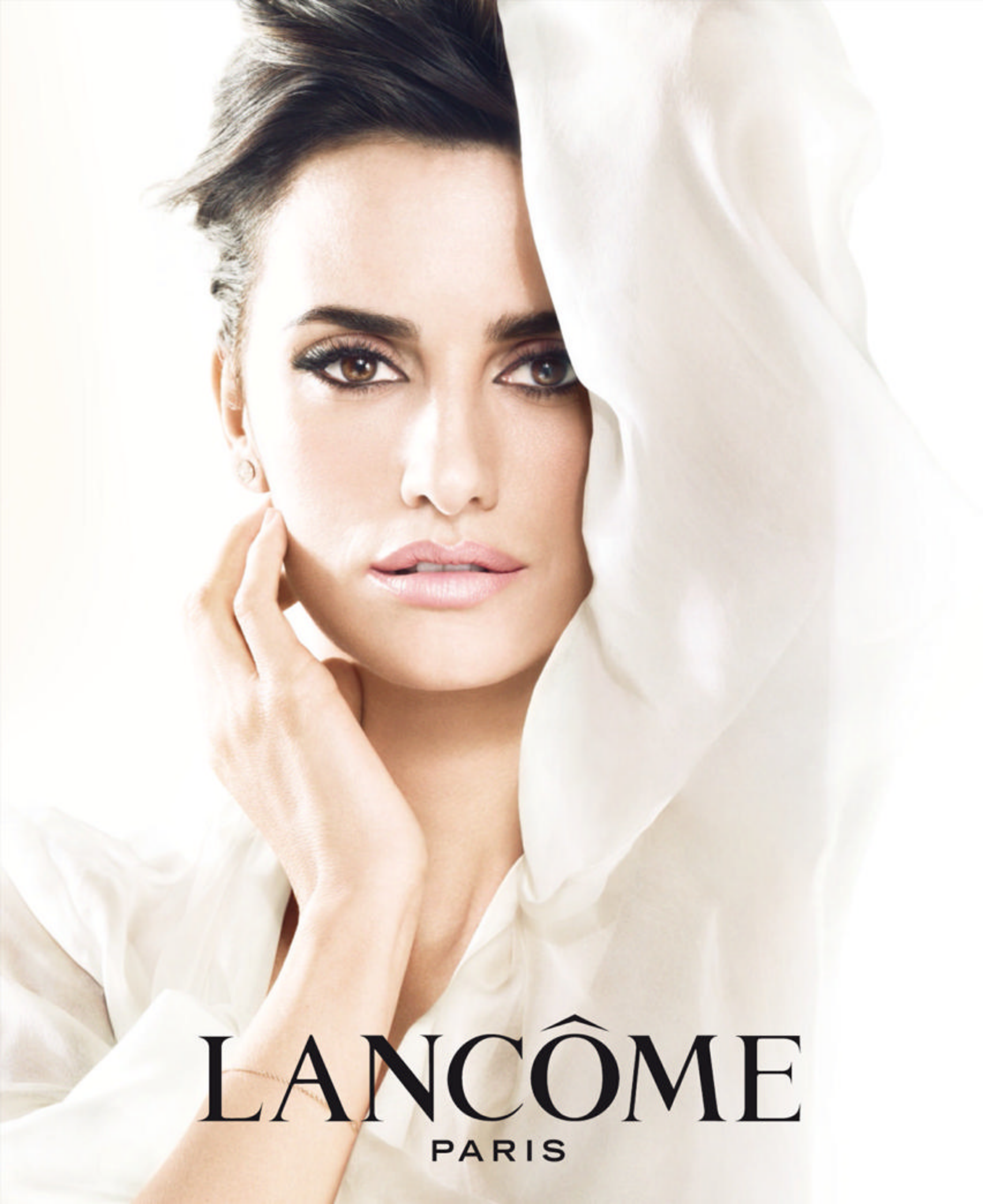
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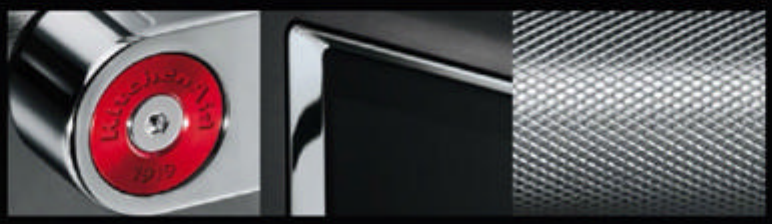

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Thoughts

"America is nothing if it consists merely of each of us; it is something only if it consists of all of us."

WOODROW WILSON, IN A SPEECH IN PITTSBURGH (JANUARY 29, 1916)

Photograph by Rona Chang

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the Simple List

YOUR MONTHLY DOSE OF USEFUL TIDBITS, TIMELY TRIVIA, AND CATCHY CONVERSATION STARTERS

13
INCHES

The length of the hair-line crack that finally silenced the Liberty Bell, 169 years ago. It wasn't the only—or even the most dramatic—damage to the famous bell, which, according to legend, tolled in 1776 to announce the Declaration of Independence. There was a larger gash, probably from early overuse, but the bell was still ceremoniously tapped every July 4. Then, in 1846, metal workers tried to repair that break and botched it (those ding-dongs), creating the second crack, which put the bell out of commission for good. This July 4, freedom will ring elsewhere: Bells will toll in civic centers, churches, and national landmarks at 2 P.M. eastern standard time across the United States.

FOR MORE FUN FACTS AND FIGURES, follow us on Twitter (@RealSimple).

.02
ACRE

The size of America's smallest national "park," located in Philadelphia. Sound too tiny to be a park? It's actually a landmarked *building,* the former residence of Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a Pole who fought in the American Revolutionary War. The protected spaces that are part of the National Park Service aren't all mountains and hiking trails. Many are educational or historic sites, like the White House and the Liberty Bell (left). But if, on your summer travels, you prefer feath-ered friends to feathered pens (on display at Kosciuszko's place, by the way), just search nps.gov. As for the biggest national park, it's Wrangell St. Elias National Park & Preserve, in Copper Center, Alaska. At over 13 million acres, it equals six Yellowstones.

12

How many poems were in *Leaves of Grass* when Walt Whitman self-published it on July 4, 1855. Whitman constantly revised the anthology over the next 40 years. The final edition had more than 400 poems. Even at its slimmer debut, it stirred up controversy. Whitman wrote freely about racial diversity during a time of slavery, and sex during a time of—well, it was the 1800s. The book got him fired from his day job at the Department of the Interior and was banned in certain cities. No wonder it later became a talisman for some of pop culture's most famous outsiders. The name and the hat of *Breaking Bad*'s Walter White were both inspired by Whitman. And the rallying cry in *Dead Poets Society*? Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!"

Written by N.Jamiyla Chisholm

Illustration by Darling Clementine

150
TIMES

How much bigger today's marine animals are, on average, than their pre–Ice Age ancestors, according to a recent study published in *Science.* For a sea urchin, that's the difference between two inches and a foot. For a blue whale? Holy mackerel! Paleobiologists compared the volume of fossils spanning 542 million years and determined that, while some species disappeared, the ones that endured survived not just by diversifying (a.k.a. evolution) but also by ballooning in size. Go big or go...extinct, it seems.

6–1
6–1
5–7
6–4

Arthur Ashe's winning score against Jimmy Connors in the finals of Wimbledon, 40 years ago this month. That day Ashe became the first—and still only—African-American man to win Wimbledon. (Serena and Venus Williams have won the women's singles title 10 times, collectively.) Connors was nine years younger than the 31-year-old Ashe and was up on him 3-0 in past matches. Yet, in the finale of the tournament that had drawn 338,000 rapt spectators, Ashe claimed the trophy. In *Ashe vs Connors: Wimbledon 1975* (just published), Pete Bodo chronicles the three-hour, history-making duel, including details about the players' preparation. (Connors hardly practiced, because of a leg injury.) Watch this year's racket from June 29 to July 12.

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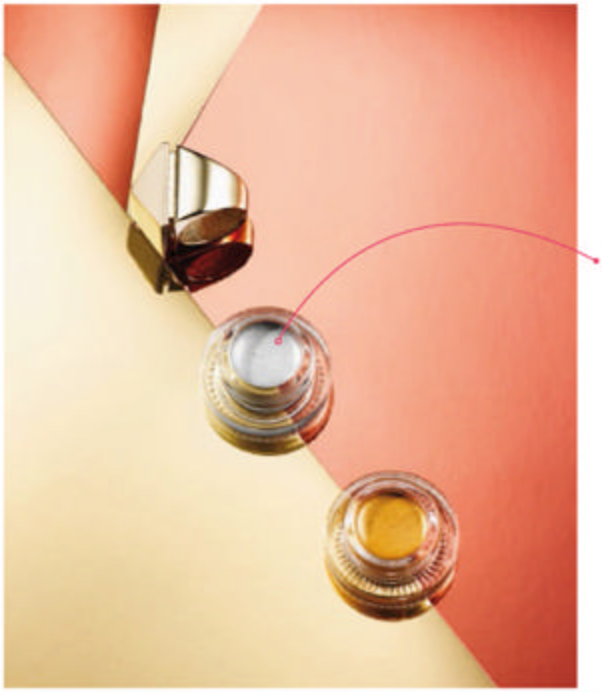

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ON THE COVER

The Most Relaxing Summer, featuring:

32 potluck recipes + tips (136)

Family vacations without the bickering (55)

100 style finds under $100 (126)

Weird pet behavior, explained (70)

The secret to delicious frozen treats (167)

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Styling by Victoria Granof

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"The watermelon cooler!"

@CALLATINI
"Carry me back to Virginia."

@EPILOGUEBLOG
"Wisconsin sunflowers."

@THEGARDENOFEATIN
"Recipe testing for some 4th of July treats."

@CLEAN_EATING_JOURNAL
"Cold watermelon slices with mint leaves from our garden."

@HERMITAGE_HILL
"Does this dog photo not make you smile?"

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- 10 Goofproof Outdoor Plants
- 9 Beauty Products You Can Make in Your Own Kitchen (shown left)
- 8 Habits of Happily Married Couples
- 7 Annoying Air-Travel Problems, Solved
- 6 Common Personality Quirks—and the Surprising Meanings Behind Them

BOTTOM: PHOTOGRAPH BY EMILY KINNI

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Editor's Note

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IS THE DINNER PARTY DEAD?

A few years ago, I read an article in the *New York Times* that chronicled the death of the dinner party. Turns out, nobody was having them anymore. People are too busy; people like to eat in restaurants; people no longer know how to make conversation (!). I read the story with sadness and, well, relief. Sadness because sitting down at a table with interesting people is much more enjoyable than standing up for hours at a cocktail party, trying to balance a glass and a tippy plate in one hand. And relief at finding out that it wasn't just my husband and I who were no longer getting invited anywhere.

Am I having dinner parties? Uh, no. And I don't particularly miss the menu planning, house straightening, and worrying about whether anyone is allergic to my dogs. But I do miss gathering interesting people around my table. So this summer, inspired by the feature "Life's a Picnic" (page 136), I have found a solution. What do you get when you combine old-fashioned dinner parties with crowdsourcing? Potlucks!

As is often the case, others at *Real Simple* figured this out before me. I asked the editorial staff for their go-to summer potluck dishes and quickly got a number of responses (see right). I hope you use the many ideas in this issue to gather your interesting friends and keep the modern (potluck) dinner party alive for years to come.

***REAL SIMPLE* HAS PODCASTS?**
Yes! Four of them, to be exact, on everything from negotiating household conflicts (The Labor of Love) to navigating the confusion of your 20s (Adulthood Made Easy), handling irritating personalities (I Want to Like You), and boiling down kitchen basics (Things Cooks Know). There are new episodes every week. Go to realsimple.com/podcasts and *listen for free.*

THE *RS* POTLUCK HALL OF FAME

I bring my "summer salad." (1) It's so gorgeous—everyone raves about how pretty it is, and (2) it's easy and yummy. The ingredients: spinach and romaine + blueberries + strawberries + red onion + candied pecans + Asiago cheese + Briannas Blush Wine Vinaigrette.
—HEATHER MUIR, beauty director

My new go-to is Watermelon Mango Poke (a Hawaiian salad). Perfect for summer. It requires no oven—just marinate in the fridge and go.
—JACKIE MONK, deputy managing editor

Turkey meatballs with Feta and sun-dried tomatoes.
—YOLANDA WIKIEL, senior editor

Black bean salsa (black beans, black-eyed peas, cucumbers, red onion, and tomatoes, with a homemade vinaigrette that has a little sugar in it, so it's slightly sweet) is a nice alternative to the typical dips. Plus, it fares better in hot weather because there's no mayo.
—BRIGITT HAUCK, senior editor, RealSimple.com

A crowd-pleaser and a belly-filler I always make in summer is quinoa with cherry tomatoes, red onion, toasted pine nuts, and lots of fresh parsley. Room temperature, dressed with balsamic and extra-virgin olive oil.
—DANIELLE CLARO, deputy editor

My husband makes a really good Mediterranean tuna salad with capers, thinly sliced onions, and extra-virgin olive oil that we put on crusty sourdough rolls, top with tomato slices, and drizzle with balsamic vinegar. Yum! Travels well, too.
—LORI SETO, reader service editor

Rainbow fruit skewers: raspberries or strawberries, cantaloupe, pineapple, green grapes, blueberries, and purple grapes.
—BETSY GOLDBERG, home director

A galette! I baked a savory butternut squash, onion, and Asiago galette for a potluck, and it went over big time.
—FILOMENA GUZZARDI, editorial production director

My friends and I do "mini food" potluck parties during the summer, with individual-serving–size items (like seven-layer dip in clear cups) and bite-size foods (sliders, deconstructed BLTs on skewers). It makes everything easy to eat when you're playing lawn games or jumping on and off the boat.
—STEPHANIE SISCO, staff home editor

PHOTOGRAPH BY PERRY HAGOPIAN; HAIR BY PAUL WARREN USING RENE FURTERER FOR ART DEPARTMENT; MAKEUP BY MELISSA SILVER FOR MAYBELLINE NEW YORK. BY MALENE BIRGER EMBELLISHED BLOUSE, $495, SHOPBOP.COM.

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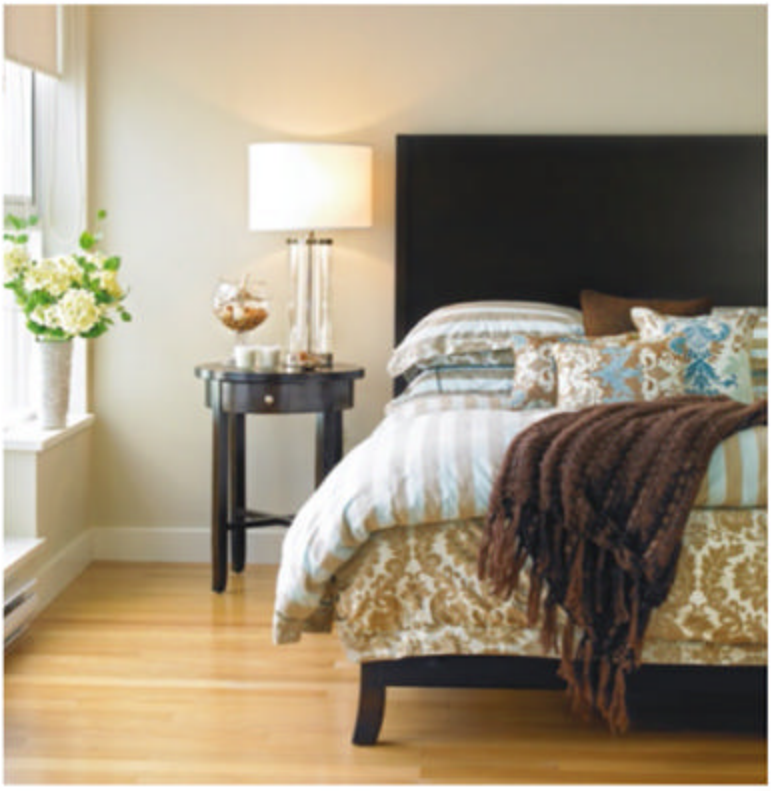
A Q&A WITH MASTER INTERIOR-DESIGN CONSULTANT

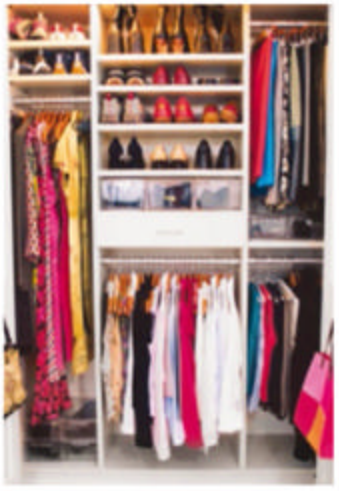
TRACY HUTSON

Redesigning a room can be a daunting task. So we sat down with master interior-designer and TV personality **Tracy Hutson** to get some helpful hints. We were pleasantly surprised at how simple it really is.

TRACY HUTSON

To help her clients hone in on their likes and dislikes, Hutson asks them to a fill out a detailed questionnaire. The answers can be very revealing.





Q1.

Is there a question that is particularly enlightening?

A. "I ask people to define their vision of luxury. If it's the whole family gathered in the kitchen, they probably aren't looking for a formal dining room. If lying in bed with the Sunday paper is their favorite indulgence, I start with a cozy, relaxed bedroom."

Q2.

Are there other aspects of our lives that can inspire us?

A. "I ask clients to open their closets and tell me what they see. Chances are the colors they return to again and again are the ones that make them feel most at ease."

Q3.

Anything else?

A. "I also ask clients to let me know where they shop. Someone who likes a farmers' market will often have a different aesthetic from someone who prefers Fifth Avenue."

Q4.

In the end, if you had to pick the most important influence on a redesign, what would it be?

A. "The key is to realize you'll feel most at home in a space that's a reflection of you. So don't be afraid to look at all aspects of your life for inspiration."

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Your Words

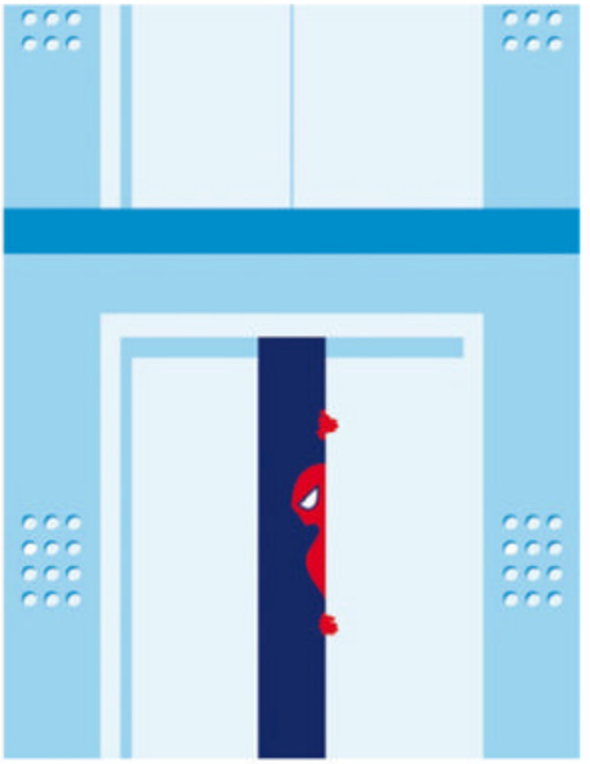
Q.

What is the funniest thing that has ever happened to you on vacation?

A.

Two years ago, my husband and I booked a city bus tour in Athens, Greece. We were told to wait in the hotel lobby at 7 A.M. and hop onto the bus when it arrived, which we did. First red flag? Our guide spoke only Portuguese. Second red flag? The bus stopped at a port, and everyone was herded onto a boat. It turns out that we, two 69-year-olds, had boarded a 12-hour party-boat tour of the Aegean Islands with a Brazilian tour group! We had no IDs and very little money, so we decided to stay put (instead of getting off at one of the island stops), drink a few beers, and get some sun. Lesson learned: Speak up at the first red flag.

VESTINA FORKEL, Orangeburg, South Carolina



WANT TO TAKE THE STRESS OUT OF A FAMILY VACATION? PICK UP SOME SMART TIPS ON PAGE 55.

Upon arriving at a beach-house rental, I noticed that it was filthy and proceeded to scrub the toilets, floors, bathtubs, and kitchen cabinets. I was so upset that the house was not ready for guests! Later, my family and I discovered that we were supposed to be staying at the house next door. (The two rentals must have shared the same entry key code.) I had "white gloved" the wrong place.

TANYA LELAND, Greenville, South Carolina

I had to buy a whole new wardrobe for my toddler after I opened up her suitcase to find that she had replaced all of her clothing with toys. Her explanation: "I just wanted to play." Once we returned home, I saw the suitcase's original contents sitting in a big pile on her bedroom floor.

LISA SCHECTER, Baltimore, Maryland

I got trapped in an elevator alone while on a family cruise, and Spider-Man (or, rather, the maître d' dressed up for "superhero night") came to my rescue, ripping open the doors and making a huge scene. The crowd applauded as he helped me escape.

LINDA MORA KONLEY, Evergreen Park, Illinois

While snorkeling for the very first time, I had finally gained control of my breathing and started to relax when I saw this black, snake-like thing swimming close to my chest. I began screaming and quickly swam back to the boat. It was a big relief when the "snake" turned out to be the belt strap from my life jacket.

SANDY GRAHAM, Easthampton, Massachusetts

During a train ride in Italy, my new husband and I attempted to chat up an elderly couple with the help of our trusty Italian phrase book. I practiced the pronunciation for "We are on our honeymoon" quietly to myself so I could get it just right. Finally, with much confidence, I exclaimed, *"Siamo allupato!"* Both the man's and the woman's jaws dropped and the blood drained from their faces. I rechecked the book and realized I had accidentally told this lovely couple that we were horny! From then on, my husband held on to the book.

ANDREA PALUMBO, Fall River, Massachusetts

Illustration by Ben Wiseman

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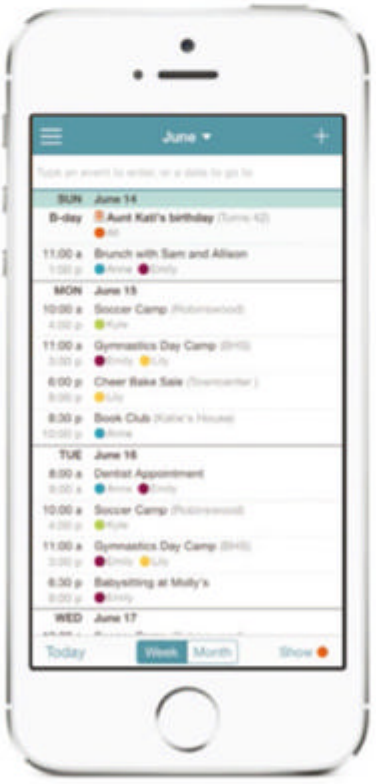

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During a go-kart ride at Disney World in the 70s, my mother and I drove separate cars while my little brother shared a car with my dad. I completed the ride first and walked over to a bridge overlooking the finish line just in time to see my brother and dad rear-end my mother's car. Her Carol Brady–style wig popped off her head and into her lap—right in front of the rows of families waiting to enter the ride. I was mortified, but my mother was laughing so hard she could barely get out of the vehicle.

KIM RAMM,
Auburn, New York

WHEN I INFORMED MY THEN FOUR-YEAR-OLD SON THAT OUR HOTEL IN TEXAS HAD A POOL, HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE EXCITED. AFTER WE GOT OFF THE PLANE, MY IN-LAWS GREETED US NEAR A FANCY FOUNTAIN ON THE AIRPORT'S MAIN FLOOR. I WAS CHATTING WITH THEM, AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW, MY SON HAD REMOVED HALF HIS CLOTHES AND WAS ABOUT TO JUMP INTO THE FOUNTAIN. HE THOUGHT IT WAS THE HOTEL POOL!

KARI BEUTZ,
Eden Prairie, Minnesota

There was the time my parents made me take a large frozen turkey from NYC to Bermuda as my carry-on.

@MELANIED333

My husband and I crashed a class of '84 high school reunion. People actually thought they remembered us and said they were happy to see us together after all these years.

BRANDY LYNN JOHNSON,
Columbus, Mississippi

Driving a rental car in San Francisco. Noticed a bad smell, then read a note, "Smells like vomit. Do not rent out," on the back window. #oops

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SUBSCRIBER OF THE MONTH

SHEROMA FUNKE

HER ANSWER: As I was standing on a beach in North Carolina with my family, we spotted a brown, round object in the water that appeared to be a person floating face down. We frantically called the police, and as they went out into the water to investigate, they discovered that it was a portable toilet from a boat. We thought we were saving a life when all we saved was a dirty toilet.

STATS: 59; married, with two grown sons; homemaker; Northbrook, Illinois.

WHAT IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE YOU'VE EVER VISITED?

The Amalfi Coast, in Italy. Just stand on the cliff when the sun is shining and look out at the gorgeous blue water. It's one of the prettiest views that you'll ever see.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST COMPLIMENT YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

That I did a good job raising my sons. As a parent, you hope your kids grow up to be kind, loving, generous, and compassionate adults. My sons exhibit all of those qualities and many more. I feel very blessed.

UPCOMING QUESTION

What is the spookiest thing that has ever happened to you?

Go to realsimple.com/yourwords and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages.

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UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE FOR MODERN TIMES

THE ORIGIN OF ROLLER COASTERS

Written by Andra Chantim
Photograph by Aaron Dyer

TALK ABOUT A WILD RIDE. In the early 19th century, Pennsylvania's Mauch Switchback Chunk Railway carried coal and workers down a nine-mile stretch from the mines at Summit Hill to the coal chutes at the Lehigh River. When advances in engineering gave the railway an extra kick of power, it became a huge thrill seekers' attraction, offering rides to the public for about 25 cents after workers had hauled coal in the morning, says Jack Sterling, a historian for the Mauch Chunk Museum and Cultural Center. "Horses were the popular mode of transportation then, so traveling at 30 to 50 miles per hour was mind-blowing," he says. Inspired by this ride, America's first official roller coaster, Coney Island's Switchback Railway, came in 1884. Today you can get a rush at hundreds of amusement parks across the country, but those with the need for maximum speed can seek out Kingda Ka, at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, New Jersey. The 456-footer hits 125 miles an hour and holds the title of fastest in North America.

BUILD A BETTER FAMILY VACATION
Find tips for improving a trip at realsimple.com/family vacation.

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS

SODA-CAN TABS

STAY TUNED FOR MORE CLEVER WINNERS OF OUR 2015 "NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS" CONTEST

Throughout the year, we'll feature the smartest, most creative ideas straight from *RS* readers like you.

RUNNER-UP

EMERGENCY SCREWDRIVER: Don't have access to a toolbox? Whip out a soda-can tab to loosen a screw when you're in a jam. Also works for opening the battery compartments of toys.
—idea from BERNADETTE PERRY, Brownsburg, Indiana

CONTEST WINNER

HANGER EXTENDER: Relief when you're running out of closet space: Slide a soda-can tab over the handle of a hanger. Now you can hook on another hanger (and another and another) and store clothes vertically.
—idea from ALISON CLARKE BODDEN, Lafayette, California

RUNNER-UP

PICTURE HANGER: Use a glue designed for metal and ceramic (like Loctite or E6000) to adhere a soda-can tab (bent slightly outward so it can hook on a nail in the wall) to the back of a frame or a hard-to-hang item, like a large initial or a decorative plate.
—idea from KATHY POOL, Henderson, Nevada

Photograph by Aaron Dyer

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI; ILLUSTRATIONS BY PETER OUMANSKI

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Taking better smartphone photos

Instagram star (906K followers and counting) and travel and still-life photographer Alice Gao offers pointers to ensure that when you shoot, you'll score.

What's a common mistake that people tend to make?
Hitting the shutter button before waiting for the camera to focus. Sometimes I see people one-hand a quick snap. That doesn't usually lead to a sharp image. I try to hold the phone with two steady hands or one hand propped on a surface.

How do you achieve a sharp close-up?
Don't use the zoom lens. When you can get as close as possible to the subject without the image distorting, take the photo. Then crop the picture afterward.

How do you feel about using the flash?
It's a stylistic choice, but I think it washes people out and makes the photo feel flat. No highlights, no shadows—you lose the pretty things that make a soulful image.

How can you make a photo brighter?
With an iPhone, tap the screen on the lightest part of the scene before snapping. When the focus square pops up, adjust the exposure by sliding the sun icon up with a finger to let more light in. You can make this adjustment on some Android phones in the settings menu.

What about in a dark restaurant?
If it's very dark, as you're taking the photo, have a friend stand beside you holding her phone's flashlight through a white napkin. This brightens the scene but diffuses harsh light. I also like the Cortex Camera app [$3, iTunes]. It prevents grainy images in low-light situations.

What's the secret to creating artful lighting?
Use one light source to make one dramatic shadow. With too many lights, you'll get unflattering shadows coming from different directions.

What's a good way to work with natural light?
For an amazing landscape photo, your best bet is the golden hour—the hour surrounding sunrise or sunset. The sun is low and has a warm tone that brings out details. To use the sun to your advantage any time of day, look for pockets of light—someone walking down a street in a slant of light makes a powerful image.

Any tips for taking better selfies?
Hold the phone high with your arm extended to prevent a double chin. On a sunny day, move into the shade. Sunlight can cause your face to get blown out or cast a harsh shadow and make you squint. The best way to take a full-body selfie is with the camera out of your hand—propped against books or something else to keep it upright—and using a timer. I suppose there's a time and a place for a selfie stick, although I'm not entirely sure when.

What's the trick to getting a great action photo?
Take shots in rapid succession. On an iPhone, just hold down the camera button. On an Android phone, use the "burst" function, or download the Burst Mode app [free, Google Play]. Then pick your favorite shot.

Do you keep HDR on or off?
I'm not a fan of it in every situation. HDR [high dynamic range] can make a picture look unnatural. The function takes many exposures and puts them in one photo so you have tons of detail.

Everyone takes a photo in front of the Eiffel Tower. How can you make yours stand out?
Get a more unique angle: low to the ground, off to the side, a close-up detail.

What else makes a compelling image?
Try the rule of thirds. Say you're shooting a mountain range. Don't place the ridge smack dab in the center; put it in the top third or bottom third of the frame for a more dynamic shot. I also love negative space. I'm cool with an image being 80 percent empty.

Thoughts on editing?
With so many options, it's easy to end up with a photo that looks odd. Instead, adjust only three things: brightness, contrast, and white balance. Toggle between the edited version and the original to make sure you're not overdoing it.

What about filters?
I don't have a favorite, but I apply them subtly. On Instagram, I may use a filter at 10 or 15 percent to lighten the shadow or bring in a hint of blue.

Do you have any photography pet peeves?
I hate when limbs are cut off—it looks amateur. Be sure to include all feet and hands in the frame.

Written by Yolanda Wikiel
Illustration by Peter Oumanski

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Rough elbows and knees

Having a thick skin is usually a good thing—unless it's on your elbows and knees. Between the minimal oil glands and the constant friction caused by bending and leaning, these often scaly spots can become—and stay—soft only with some TLC from you. Here, three tactics.

1. Add a buffer.

Dry skin is hereditary, but certain activities exacerbate it. "When planking or kneeling in yoga, for example, the skin on your elbows and knees thickens to protect itself, just like the calluses do on your feet," says Robyn Gmyrek, a dermatologist in New York City. Create a shield by opting for workout gear that covers these trouble spots. Other helpful hints: Go easy on the moisture-sapping A/C, or use a humidifier. And take lukewarm, not hot, showers. In the heat, wear full-coverage layers of thin fabrics (as opposed to bare skin) to seal in moisture.

Written by
Jenny Jin
Photograph by
Aaron Dyer

2. Exfoliate more.

Sloughing off dead cells helps ingredients penetrate. Buff gently with a glycolic cleanser or a scrub two to three times a week. "If you feel pain or stinging, you're removing healthy tissue. Apply less pressure, or scale back to once a week," says Gmyrek. Try Glytone Exfoliating Body Wash ($32, skincarerx.com) or S.W. Basics Body Scrub ($22, swbasics.com).

3. Moisturize better.

"At least twice a day, and definitely as soon as you get out of the shower, apply a thick cream or ointment to the areas," says Gmyrek. Look for urea or lactic acid on the ingredient list. Both help break down dead skin cells, which allows for better absorption of your products. Try Avène Akérat Smoothing Exfoliating Cream ($31, dermstore.com).

SERIOUS STUFF

If you notice any of these symptoms—cracked skin; thick, white patches; the area is red, painful, or hot to the touch; or the dryness doesn't subside within two weeks of consistent treatment—see a dermatologist to determine if you're suffering from psoriasis or another condition.

SMOOTH TALK FROM THE PROS

Find out how dermatologists take care of their own skin at realsimple.com/dermsecrets.

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI; SMALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILY KINNI

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TREND TO TRY

Polka dots

The look of the season is easy to spot. It's retro, flattering, and all-around fun.

1 PEPLUM THAT POPS
Let this bubbly top grab the spotlight. Pair it with simple white jeans. 1.State top, $98, nordstrom.com.

2 AIRY SCARF
This is how to layer in the summer: featherweight fabric with a pale metallic print. 11 Main scarf, $38, 11main.com.

3 CLUTCH MOVE
This graphic straw bag will kick any neutral outfit into overdrive. Kayu clutch, $125, kayudesign.com.

4 HEELS WITH CHARM
Punctuate your pretty floral dresses with ladylike mules. Delman shoes, $275, delmanshoes.com.

5 CIRCLE SKIRT
With a tucked-in white T-shirt, a twirly midi looks straight out of the 50s, but with a (longish) crop top, it's modern-day chic. BCBGeneration skirt, $108, lordandtaylor.com.

6 SWEET SWIMSUIT
Splash out in this not-too-itty-bitty polka-dot bikini. Marysia swimsuit, $260, marysiaswim.com.

Written by Yolanda Wikiel

Photographs by Philip Friedman

SOFT STYLING BY MAI TRAN

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THE STAPLE

HOT SAUCE

People can get heated about their hot-sauce allegiances. Most are made with the same key ingredients—chilies, vinegar, salt—but the best ones deliver flavor, not just fire. They should taste of fresh, tangy chilies. Continue to smother your wings in the stuff, but also try a dash or two in less expected places—like fried egg sandwiches, pasta salad, barbecue sauce, and even clam chowder—for a stealthy, spicy kick.

Written by Chris Morocco
Photograph by Aaron Dyer

3 QUICK IDEAS

RECIPE

Cucumber chili-butter sandwiches

HANDS-ON TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **10 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

Mix 4 tablespoons unsalted butter (at room temperature), 2 teaspoons hot sauce, 1 chopped red chili pepper, and a pinch each of salt and black pepper. Spread onto sliced soft white bread and sandwich with slices of cucumber.

EASY UPGRADE

Spiked salad dressing

Combine 3 tablespoons olive oil, 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar, 1 small clove garlic (chopped), 1 to 2 tablespoons hot sauce, and salt and pepper. Serve over hearty greens with sliced radishes and salami.

EASY UPGRADE

Hot sauce and maple glaze

Mix equal parts hot sauce and pure maple syrup. Drizzle over grilled chicken or vegetables.

ALL OVER AMERICA
Frank's RedHot sauce was born in 1920 in New Iberia, Louisiana, and soared to popularity in Buffalo, New York, in 1964. Today more than 3.5 million gallons are consumed every year.

PROP STYLING BY JOJO LI

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Now what?!?

Smart solutions for life's little disasters

I swim almost every day. Even after I shower, my hair and skin still smell like chlorine.

DANIELLE MICHAUD, via e-mail

THE FIX: After you do your laps but before you get in the shower, spritz your body and hair with SwimSpray ($15, swimspray.com), which consists mainly of water and vitamin C, suggests Larissa Carmichael, a member of U.S. Masters Swimming, a nonprofit organization of swimmers nationwide. Let sit for a minute, then rinse off and wash as usual. Cleansers with vitamin C (otherwise known as ascorbic acid) help break the bond between chlorine and skin proteins, says Jessica Weiser, M.D., of the New York Dermatology Group, in New York City. If the bleach smell in your hair persists, use the spray plus a shampoo designed to remove chlorine (like Triswim; $14, sbrsportsinc.com). Rinsing your body and hair with clean water *before* each swim will also help reduce the amount of chlorine that clings.

How do I get hair spray off my bathroom walls?

MEGHAN SMITH, via Facebook

THE FIX: USE A HOMEMADE CLEANER. IN A SPRAY BOTTLE, SHAKE TOGETHER 1 PART SHAMPOO AND 3 PARTS WARM WATER, SAYS CHERYL SOUSAN, THE FOUNDER OF THE LIFESTYLE BLOG TIDYMOM.NET. SPRITZ THE SOLUTION LIBERALLY ON THE WALLS AND LET SIT FOR TWO MINUTES. (TEST FIRST ON A HIDDEN SPOT IF THE WALLS ARE PAINTED OR PAPERED.) WIPE THE AREA WITH A MICROFIBER CLOTH, MOVING FROM THE BOTTOM UP TO CATCH DRIPS. DRY WITH A CLEAN CLOTH.

My hands and feet swell when I'm out walking.

NAME WITHHELD, via e-mail

THE FIX: Breathe easy. Swelling in the extremities is a fairly common reaction to exercise, says Robert Graham, M.D., a wellness and integrative-medicine director at North Shore–Long Island Jewish Health System, in Lake Success, New York. The blood vessels in the hands and feet are small and close to the surface. When blood flow is increased, which happens when you work out, these areas are more likely to visibly expand than others. Plus, because your hands and feet are lower than many parts of your body, gravity can also cause blood to pool there. Every 10 minutes or so, do a few knee lifts, and with your arms raised above your head, shake out your fingers, suggests Suzanne Steinbaum, D.O., the director of women's heart health at Lenox Hill Hospital, in New York City. This should help redistribute the blood. As long as the swelling goes down soon after your walk, it's probably nothing to worry about. But consult a doctor if it lasts for more than an hour.

HAVE A DISASTER that needs solving? E-mail your problem to askrealsimple@realsimple.com.

Written by Andra Chantim

Illustration by Peter Oumanski

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Little Helpers

4 ingenious products to make your day easier

1 LEAF STRIPPER
A speedier way to separate greens from their stems. The various-size holes on this kitchen tool accommodate everything from thyme to kale. Chef'n Looseleaf Stripper, $8, amazon.com.

2 CLOTHES-SEPARATING LUGGAGE
Hate clean garments commingling with dirty stuff? This suitcase has a hamper with an air valve, so you can roll laundry compactly and save space. Carry On Spinner, $238, geniuspack.com.

3 SOLAR-POWERED LANTERN
Whether you're camping out or stuck in a blackout, this inflatable light provides 12 hours of consistent LED light. PackLite 12, $23, luminaid.com.

4 SILICONE TUMBLERS
Save your nice barware. Use these colorful, shatterproof nine-ounce glasses for serving refreshments on the patio instead. In five patterns. $30 for four, silipint.com.

Written by
Tanya Christian

Photographs by
Jens Mortensen

Eco revamp

MOSQUITO CONTROL

Citronella and tea-tree oil? They provide only a few minutes of protection. Here are green solutions that *really* keep bugs from biting.

ELIMINATE STANDING WATER. Anything that holds water for a week or more, even an underchlorinated swimming pool, is a potential breeding site, says Laura C. Harrington, Ph.D., the chair of entomology at Cornell University. Spots in need of draining: baby pools, birdbaths, recycling bins, pet bowls, flowerpot saucers, and clogged rain gutters.

BLOW THEM AWAY. "Many mosquitoes are highly active in the hour before and after sunrise and sunset," says Jim Pecor, a museum specialist in the Walter Reed Biosystematics Unit of the Smithsonian Institution. If you're outside at these times, set a fan on high nearby to make flying difficult for the pests.

USE A KINDER REPELLENT. The Environmental Protection Agency says that DEET, the most effective ingredient in bug sprays, is safe if used properly, but many people fear it may harm the environment. An alternative is an oil of lemon eucalyptus–based product, like Repel Lemon Eucalyptus Natural Spray ($8, drug store.com), which works for up to two hours.

—KAITLYN PIRIE

PROP STYLING BY MARIANA VERA; ILLUSTRATION BY PETER OUMANSKI. THANK YOU TO ROXANNE CONNELLY, PH.D., PROFESSOR OF ENTOMOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.

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Life Lessons

GOOD READ

The house was alive

Living rent-free in Taiwan sounded like paradise to *Karen E. Bender* and her family—until they met their roommates.

WE DIDN'T KNOW that the house was inhabited. We just knew that it was free. My husband had received a Fulbright grant to teach at a university in Taiwan, and we were packing up and moving there for the year. We were going to live in a house on campus, which was like a joyously overgrown park/forest. Workers cut the tall grass with weed whackers, not lawn mowers, so most of it remained about a foot high, and the house was nestled among green bushes and palm trees. We were warned about the house's state of disrepair—it was about 60 years old and moldy and crumbly in parts—but we didn't care. It was convenient; it was free.

We unpacked. One of us innocently set an open juice container on the kitchen counter. We left, and when we returned, five minutes later, there were ants. Not a *few* ants—a dark, organized stream of ants, thick as hair, coming from a crack in the wall, massing around the juice, a fuzzy, moving swarm. A juice *drop*. There was a drop of juice on the counter, and it was a call to the ant population in the area, an opportunistic convoy with finely honed communication skills. Another battalion was coming from inside a cabinet.

We grabbed a paper towel and wiped the ants up. Then we continued unpacking. Someone cheerfully dropped a pastry wrapper into the sink, and when

Photograph by Christopher Marley

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SUMMER DILEMMA

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SUMMER DILEMMA

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we returned, there they were—even more ants, from cracks we hadn't noticed, in the ceiling.

We had been welcomed.

The house was free and on campus and somewhat crumbly, and it was also alive.

We met even more insects over the course of a few days. A child came running out of the bathroom, shrieking, "The spider!" We looked. It was about three inches across, or the size of a spider one might buy at Party City to hang outside the window for Halloween. It crept quickly across the bathroom—harmful just in its ability to create insomnia. So we hit it with a shoe. It crumpled. Out of nowhere, a gang of ants appeared, as though summoned, ready to cart the spider off to the den somewhere.

There was a call—*"eh-eh-eh"*—from the wall.

"What was *that*?"

It was a gecko. Now they appeared, scrambling up the walls, their white bellies pressed against the windows. They eat bugs, so they were here to help us.

So began our year of living with the insects.

Our family members had different responses to the bugs. Our daughter hated the ants. "There are ants all over my bed!" she announced, and I rushed in, expecting a swarm, and found: One. Two. Three. I picked them off with Kleenex, and we searched, my heart fearful that I would find another and she would refuse to sleep in her bed. But *where* then? Thankfully, they vanished. For that night.

There were regular mosquitos and black flies, which were teensy, fairylike creatures, but which left chomping, weltish bites. They seemed mostly to like biting our son, so we set a large mesh net over his bed, which kept them out. We fought the mosquitos with burning coils of bitter scent outside the door, and wire paddles that could electrify them, and shoes. We went to sleep wearing long sleeves and dabbed on a substance called Green Oil, a menthol oil we bought at the 7-Eleven that made your throat tingle when you breathed it. We debated filling the house with toxic gas or injecting chemicals into the floorboards to get rid of the ants/flies/mosquitos/termites, but then I read about the chemicals and their effects and decided no.

About the author
Karen E. Bender's most recent book is the story collection *Refund,* published by Counterpoint Press.

When you live in a house that is alive, you are not quite sure what is going to happen. What might swerve onto your arm, or drop onto your head, or stream in trails into the kitchen sink. You cultivate a balance between wanting comfort, to set your plate down without swarms of ants rushing toward it, and deciding to allow a few ants on the table just because they are there.

At first I was edgy, picking ants off my daughter's bed, tucking in my son's mosquito net, wondering if that smushy thing I just stepped on was alive, but then I got used to it. We swept up; we wiped off the bugs that were in the way and went on with it. Anything vaguely foodlike had to be bagged. I didn't like the biting things; they had to go. But the furry caterpillar inching across the bathroom was kind of interesting, and the ants, if they were in small numbers, could be ignored.

And then it was winter, and for a few months, everything died or hid. The ants disappeared. Someone left an unwashed glass in the sink ("For God's sake, someone wash the glass!! Quick!"), but oddly, nothing crawled into it. There were no mosquitos shrieking in our ears. The walls were silent. We shivered, as there was no central heating, but the house was peaceful, even a bit peculiar and still.

Then it was spring. One day we walked into the house and things started dropping from the ceiling. They were small and brown and curled. Some of them flew. What were they? Where were they coming from? We ran through the house capturing them with Kleenexes and brooms and threw them outside. We were taking out some trash and passed a giant palm frond; I kicked it over and spied dozens of these little squirmy bugs underneath. Some flew off.

They were called *bai yi.* Or...termites. At night, I saw them swarming under the streetlights, a cloud of orange confetti. They had entered the house with a vengeance. I had a moment of fear: Who would win? Would this be the moment the insects took over and we'd

When you live in a house that is alive, you cultivate a balance between wanting to set your plate down without swarms of ants rushing toward it and deciding to allow a few ants on the table just because they are there.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONAH SIEGEL

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K15569

What did it mean about us that we were learning to live with bugs? Why is the idea of home-as-fortress necessary? From bugs, from dirt, from any chaos at all?

have to gas the house or move out? But then they disappeared, just gone—and the ants were back, more tentatively this time. Or maybe we were just ready, with our knotted plastic bags and cereal boxes crammed in the refrigerator. And there were the giant spiders, but I had gotten so used to them that, when one crawled behind a dresser, I didn't hunt it down. I just let it go.

Were we becoming blasé? What did it mean about us that we were learning to live with the bugs? Everyone around us lived with bugs; they swept up their ants and *bai yi* and went about their day. Friends who lived in the newer apartments in the city didn't have the same issues. But our neighbors didn't assume that a house was a place contained within itself; they didn't think that it was a fortress for humans. And why is the idea of home-as-fortress necessary? From bugs, from dirt, from any chaos at all?

I used to think our house in the U.S. had bugs. Sometimes we saw cockroaches run across the floor; sometimes ants circled the cat bowl. But when we returned from Taiwan, our house was mostly empty of things crawling out of nowhere. There was nothing in the shower, nothing flying or dropping from the ceiling. There was no one there but us. My husband and daughter were most relieved—they had not liked the bugs at all. I thought it was more peaceful, yes, but also—I have to say—a bit more boring. When I saw a spider crawl across our bathroom—one that looked absurdly tiny, though it was normal size—I felt relieved. Something else was here.

I let it go. ■

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Modern Manners

REAL SIMPLE'S ETIQUETTE EXPERT, *CATHERINE NEWMAN*, OFFERS HER BEST ADVICE ON YOUR SOCIAL QUANDARIES.

My husband and I have one four-year-old daughter. We have not decided if we will have another child. Friends and strangers constantly ask when I will give my daughter a sibling. Some push the idea so hard that I feel guilty and worry about it. How do I get these well-meaning friends to stop asking without offending them or damaging relationships?
A.S.

My 12-year-old daughter, largely ignored by her older brother, has joked about calling her memoir *Sister of an Only Child.* Rest assured, a sibling guarantees nothing in particular when it comes to companionship. Happy childhoods come in all forms. So take courage in the face of meddlesome questions! People can be quick to presume that what's right (or wrong) for them is right (or wrong) for everybody. They may be well-meaning, as you generously suggest, but they shouldn't pressure you. Try giving folks one free pass: If they ask a single time, say, "That's something we're still figuring out. Our hands—and hearts—are pretty full with the one we've got!" Only the most dogged busybodies will dig further, and then you can say, "It sounds like having more kids was the right thing for you guys. We're still not sure, and for now it's a sensitive and private matter." Maybe once you validate their decisions, they'll leave you alone about your own.

About Catherine
The author of the parenting memoir *Waiting for Birdy,* Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

I am the only girl with two brothers in my family. One of my brothers is getting married this summer. My other brother is the best man, and my daughter is a junior bridesmaid. The bride did not ask me to be a bridesmaid. My parents are disappointed in the choice, and I am quite hurt. Is there a polite way to approach the subject with my future sister-in-law? Should I even bother?
S.A.

This is one of those cases where you feel legitimately hurt, on the one hand, but on the other, there's absolutely nothing to do about it. Traditional etiquette gives the bride full license to choose her half of the wedding party. It would have been lovely of her to include you, but the exclusion surely reflects the juggling of complex factors rather than personal snubbing or simple oversight. She may have a large family of her own, she may have a particular friend group she wanted to keep intact, or she may have picked her bridesmaids as a last gasp of her old life before joining her lot with your brother's. Whatever the reason, the invitation to your daughter is surely intended to be, among other things, a conciliatory gesture. Be soothed by it, encourage your parents to do the same, and move on. Your brother is getting married! Celebrate the happy couple, dance your heart out (in your dress of choice, btw), and welcome his bride into your life.

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Find all the answers to navigate real life with confidence, good humor, and style in this new book

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- ☑ Decorate on the cheap
- ☑ Dress like a grown-up
- ☑ Manage your money
- ☑ Take care of your health
- ☑ Deal with messy breakups

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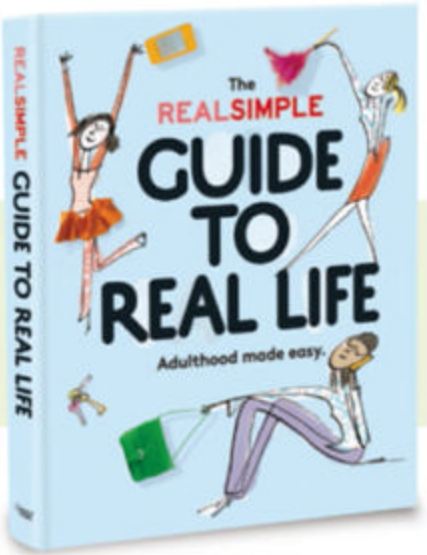

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Recently there was a job opening at my company. I was not on the interview committee, but a colleague giving me a summary of the candidates frequently referred to one as "our minority candidate." I knew the candidate she was referring to was African-American because I saw all of the candidates walk past my office, and all but one were Caucasian females. It unnerved me that she referred to this candidate in this way. My husband is African-American. It makes me sick to think of my husband—or one day my daughter—applying for a job and being called "our minority candidate." I'm ashamed that I didn't say something to my colleague in the moment. Should I now, months later? Or do I let this one go and know that in the future I will speak up?
J. P.

This is such a hard question that I asked Allessandra Bradley-Burns, a corporate-diversity expert and a cofounder of the firm DEILAB, which creates engineering and innovation training and products, to help think it through. She pointed out that the current highly sensitized racial environment can leave us at a loss about how to act and feeling as if *minority* is a word with negative associations. But, as she put it, "any time a company communicates the importance of hiring people of color, we should celebrate that." So the fact that your company made a point of noting a minority candidate is a good thing. "Of course, what we hope," says Bradley-Burns, "is that companies will see being a minority as one of the *many* assets that a qualified candidate will bring to the table." OK, now to your actual question: What should you have said to your coworker? Maybe something like "So what you mean is that she has everything we're looking for *and* she's a minority? That's awesome." It might be helpful to start a conversation—with that person or more broadly in your office—about how to describe all of a job candidate's qualifications equally, rather than leading with race, so that being a minority finds its place as one of many positive attributes.

HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

Submit your social conundrums to Catherine at **REALSIMPLE.COM/MODERNMANNERS.** Seleted letters will be featured on these pages each month.

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5 Keys to a Peaceful Family Vacation

No trip is smooth sailing all the time. There are jellyfish stings. Bad weather. Bad moods. But with a few adjustments—some logistical, some attitudinal—you can at least set course in the right direction.

Written by Rebecca Webber
Illustration by Shout

1

LISA SCOTTOLINE

Make sacrifices.

My daughter, 29, and I travel a lot together. I finally figured how to make the most of it with less conflict: Do what you hate for love and shut up about it. My daughter is very adventurous, and I never leave my office. A few years ago, we went to Hawaii, and Francesca wanted to ride horses down into a volcano. I wanted to sit on the beach with an umbrella drink. But I forced myself to get on the damn horse and shut up. It was really, really steep, and I just closed my eyes. Afterwards, I got a lot of hugs and my daughter said, "I know you were really scared, and I love you forever for doing that." What's the goal of your life? For me, it's to make the people I love happy and have a good time with them.

2

LIZ BOROD WRIGHT

Eat in.

Restaurants can be stressful on vacation. You have to agree where to go and get a reservation or wait for a table. Plus, if you have little kids, they're tired at the end of the day, so the meal isn't pleasant anyway. It makes a big difference to rent a house or an apartment or at least get a hotel room with a kitchenette. Last summer, we got a beach house close enough to the ocean that we could even come back for lunch. (And my then three-year-old could have his usual, a cheese sandwich.) Many families have picky eaters—of all ages. A kitchen allows everyone to eat what he wants. And you save money.

3

WENDY PERRIN

Know your limits.

You have to go at the speed of the slowest common denominator. If that's your toddler or your great-aunt, that's how fast you're going to go. You should head into the vacation knowing that. Be realistic. Say, "This is what we're going to be able to accomplish." And then give yourself ample time to do each activity and enjoy it. If you overshoot, you're only going to end up frustrated.

4

JEANNIE BERTOLI

Escape each other.

On family vacations, people who don't normally spend 24 hours a day together are suddenly doing just that. Plan breaks every three or four hours. Find time to read a book, or—even better—walk on the beach alone. Doing something physical will help reset your focus. And attention, parents of teenagers: They can make the entire family miserable if forced to stay close at all times. Give them some freedom. I remember that age. When we feel like we *have* to be together, we want to rebel. Once it's not required, we want to stick around.

5

ALI WENTWORTH

Plan for late-afternoon crankiness.

There's always the point in the day when you've been to the beach but it's not time for dinner yet. The kids want phones or iPads, you say no, and everyone's upset. Have activities for that in-between time, even if it's just a card game. On a recent trip, I created a scavenger hunt every day at 5 P.M. The kids had to follow clues, and the winner got a prize. Another evening I buried a box filled with candy in the sand. They had to search the whole beach for it, which was great, because it exhausted them and it took forever. Meanwhile, the adults watched with a cocktail.

THE EXPERTS

LISA SCOTTOLINE coauthored, with her daughter, Francesca Serritella, the essay collection *Does This Beach Make Me Look Fat?* She lives near Philadelphia.

JEANNIE BERTOLI, PH.D., is a relationship and divorce trainer. She lives in Los Angeles.

LIZ BOROD WRIGHT is a blogger at Travelogged.com. She lives in New York City.

ALI WENTWORTH is an actress and a comedian and the author of *Happily Ali After: And More Fairly True Tales*. She lives in New York.

WENDY PERRIN is TripAdvisor's travel advocate. She lives in suburban New Jersey.

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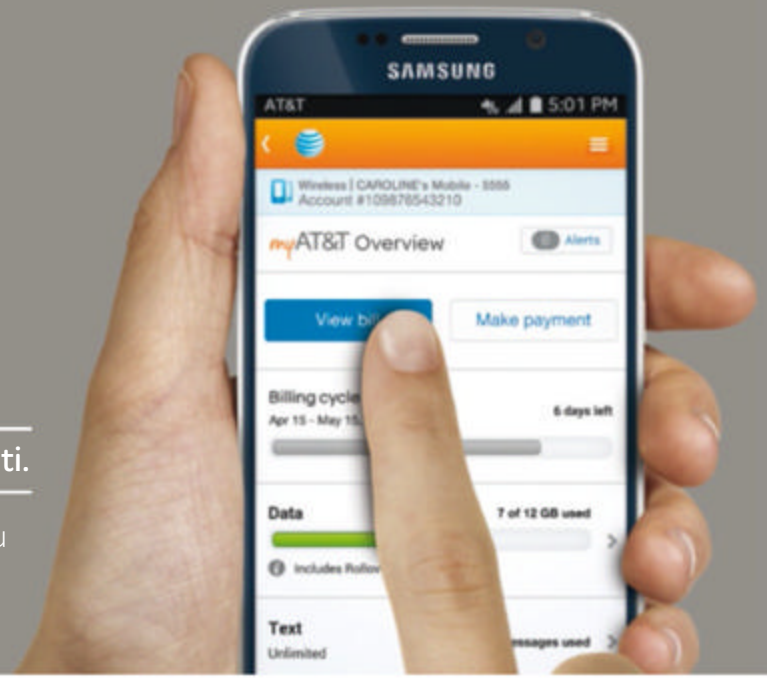

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the Guide

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EASY DIY GALLERY WALLS

Think turning your prints and photos into a cohesive, curated display requires an interior-design degree? These three simple styling schemes can help anyone get the hang of it.

Styling by Rachael Weiner
Photographs by Johnny Miller

USE THIS FORMULA TO CHOOSE YOUR ART

Stick with one loose palette (like the blue-and-gold combination on this and the following page), pick pieces of various sizes, and mix up the styles (abstracts, seascapes, florals) and mediums (photographs, paintings, drawings).

Artwork on this page sourced from 20x200.com, dwell.com, and minted.com. For buying info for all the pieces in this story, see Credits (last pages).

1

LEANING ON LEDGES

No measuring or hammering needed with this ultra-adaptable display that lets you add pieces or shift them around whenever you want. Position the frames so they're overlapping slightly in an uneven (not uniform) way. The goal: a silhouette of undulating heights.

Artwork on this page from 20x200.com, art.com, artfullywalls.com, dwell.com, minted.com, and thetappancollective.com.

LEAVE BREATHING ROOM
A few inches of space here and there keeps the collection from feeling cluttered.

SIZE MATTERS
This picture ledge is 3½ inches deep—enough to layer two framed pieces. Want to add a plant or a vase? Try a ledge that's deeper than 4 inches.

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THINK IN 3-D
Offset the art with textural elements, like a hanging planter or an angular piece of sea glass (in center, on brass nails).

USE THE WHOLE WALL
Ignore the old-school "eye level" hanging rule and let the artwork explode downward. It makes for a fresh and dynamic display.

2

CLEAN AND COLLAGEY
Using frames and mats in the same color unifies all the artwork, giving the collection an orderly look even with a few unframed items sprinkled in. Start with one piece somewhere in the middle, like the paper-airplane print here. Then, aiming for balance, build up, down, and out. Haphazard spacing—two inches separating some pieces, four or five between others—lends an organic, easygoing look.

Artwork on this page from artfullywalls.com, maxwangerprintshop.com, and ugallery.com.

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3

GRAPHIC GRID
This array gets its contained, systematic style from artwork stacked in columns. Before hanging, trace each frame onto newspaper and play around with the cutouts taped to the wall until you find a setup that feels well proportioned.

Artwork on this page from artfullywalls.com, artifact uprising.com, minted.com, and permanentpress editions.com.

NEUTRAL TERRITORY Add touches of light wood (these magnetic "cleats" clamp the art in place) to warm up a black-and-white scheme.

NEED FRAMING TIPS? Get guidance for all kinds of artwork at realsimple.com/findaframe.

THE BOTTOM-LINE TRICK Put some of your biggest, boldest pieces below, lining up their bottom edges. Build up vertical columns from there.

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Ask the Organizer

ANDREW MELLEN, A NEW YORK CITY–BASED EXPERT ON ORDER, TACKLES YOUR DECLUTTERING DILEMMAS.

buried under boxes

I moved into a new home a few years ago and still have many boxes that I haven't unpacked because I find it overwhelming. Any ideas to motivate me to finally do it?

J.T., via Facebook

When people avoid the last boxes, it's usually because they contain sentimental or random items that don't have an obvious spot in the home. It takes more time to put them away than, say, a toaster. But when you ignore the boxes, each time you walk by them, you're reminded that you're putting it off, and that's energy-sapping. You need to make the task less daunting. Tell yourself that just because you brought this stuff to the new house doesn't mean you have to keep it all. Set aside 30 minutes to look through the boxes, pulling out any items you don't love or need, to donate or toss. Schedule another block of time—no more than three hours without a break—to find places for the rest. Bookend the job with phone calls to a friend who will hold you accountable. Tell her, "It's 2 o'clock. I'll call you back at 4, when I'm done."

heavily seasoned

We're a large family that loves to cook, so we have loads of spices in jars of all sizes. It's a total mess. What's the fix?

A.R., via Facebook

I tell clients that, for easy access, your best bet is a drawer organizer (Bamboo spice tray, $15, bedbathandbeyond.com). Use uniform containers (Droppar spice jars, $3 for two, ikea.com), and keep the overflow on a high shelf in the pantry. If you can't spare the drawer space, store spices stadium style, on a tiered shelf (Seville Classics spice rack, $20, overstock.com). Arrange them alphabetically so you can find the one you need fast.

GOT A QUESTION?
Submit it at realsimple.com/organizing.

e-mail fail

I have 50,000 e-mails in my in-box! I need a system for what to keep and where to save it.

K.Y., via Facebook

Before setting up a system, clear out the old store promos and other nonessential e-mails, including earlier parts of a thread that you've replied to. The best approach: Set a timer for half an hour, sort by sender, and delete away. Do this at the same time every day until you get through all 50,000. (A routine keeps you on track.) Once those e-mails are gone, file the rest into folders. Use broad labels (Family, Work, PTA) so you can file quickly, without much effort. Every three months, give all the folders a once-over to find e-mails you can now purge.

Illustration by The Ellaphant in the Room

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

The vets will see you now

LET THE FUR FLY! ANSWERS TO YOUR HAIRIEST PET QUESTIONS.

THE PET EXPERTS

STEVEN APPELBAUM, president of the Animal Behavior College, in Santa Clarita, California.

RICHARD E. GOLDSTEIN, D.V.M., chief medical officer at the Animal Medical Center, in New York City.

JEFF WERBER, D.V.M., owner of the Century Veterinary Group, in Los Angeles.

Q.
damage control

I rescued a neutered male Rottweiler/terrier from the Humane Society 10 months ago. He still marks in the house three to five times a day. What's the fix?

W. M., via Facebook

A. Once a dog is neutered, he'll typically stop marking after about six weeks, says veterinarian Jeff Werber, though it may recur if he becomes stressed (say, from an unfamiliar visitor dropping by with a pet). In a case like yours, when it's still happening regularly months later, it might be due to a health issue, like a urinary tract infection, says veterinarian Richard E. Goldstein. Alternatively, it could be a result of the way the dog was neutered, says Werber. (Some clinics use a sterilization method that leaves remaining testosterone, which can trigger the urge to mark.) To pinpoint the cause, ask for a testosterone test at your next vet visit. If it shows levels consistent with those of an unneutered dog, your pet may need a repeat procedure.

In either case, commit yourself to some hard-core house training. First, thoroughly clean the marked areas. If you don't get rid of the scent entirely, it can prompt your dog to continue urinating there, says animal behaviorist Steven Appelbaum, who suggests using Simple Solutions Extreme Stain & Odor Remover ($10, wag.com). Then, on a weekend when you're able to hang around the house for a while, start a "frequent elimination schedule" to carry out as consistently as possible over the next four to five weeks. Every few hours, take your dog out to relieve himself, then praise him. While indoors, keep him on a leash by your side. When you leave the house, have the dog stay in the yard (as long as it's safe), and at night, when you're sleeping, crate him. "The leash and crate will keep him from marking, because most dogs won't soil the area where they sit or lay," says Appelbaum. After a month or so, your dog should drop the habit.

Written by Stephanie Sisco

Q.
can't take my eyes off of you

Lately my elderly cat, Bart, follows me everywhere and sits and stares at me. What's going on here?

J. L., via Facebook

A. Felines commonly stare for two reasons: They want food, or they're curious about your actions. But if your cat hasn't stared much in the past, it's best to see a vet, especially if you're also noticing changes in his eating, drinking, or defecating habits. That's because cats love routine, and behavioral deviations can signal early signs of disease—possibly even a neurological issue, like dementia. If your vet rules that out, the fixed gazing could be your cat's response to a change in his surroundings—anything from a house guest to your working longer hours. In this scenario, he may be craving attention, so giving him extra cuddle time can put a stop to the staring.

Q.
leap dog

We have a 1½-year-old shepherd mix who jumps on everyone who comes over. What's the best way to train her to stop?

L. P., via Facebook

A. Affection is a lovable quality in a dog, but it's not so endearing to the person getting pounced on. To resolve it, Werber suggests telling family members to ignore the pouncing or, better yet, to walk directly toward the dog midjump each time she does it. This puts the pooch in an awkward position that she won't like. If it happens over and over, she'll start avoiding that uncomfortable feeling and stay on all fours. Whenever she doesn't jump, reward her with a treat and affection. When it comes to friends and other nonfamily visitors, you'll need a different approach. Just before they come over, put your dog on a leash or in a head collar and harness with a short lead (Halti Head Collar & Link, $16, amazon.com). Keep it taut, so she's unable to pounce, command her to sit, and reinforce the nonjumping with praise and a treat. After a few months, you may not need the gear to ensure calmer greetings.

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The no-screen summer

OK, *limited*-screen summer. Banishing electronics completely may not be feasible, but free time can become a free-for-all unless you have a plan. Here's how to power down realistically—plus creative ideas to keep 'em otherwise occupied.

SET HOUSE RULES

The first Monday morning you wake up and don't have to scramble to get everyone out the door with packed lunches is... liberating. And also terrifying. So many hours to fill! Start the summer with a family meeting to address guidelines—these are for you as much as for your kids—so everyone is on the same page.

1

NO ONE IS GOING FULL SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

"Remember that forbidden fruit is the tastiest," says Lucy Jo Palladino, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist in Encinitas, California, and the author of *Parenting in the Age of Attention Snatchers.* Don't go crazy. *(I'm throwing the iPad in the ocean! Long live summer!)* "If you have unreasonable expectations and rules, you will simply double their desire," says Palladino. To help them make good choices when they *do* get screen time, have a little back-and-forth. You ask about their favorite shows or let them teach you a game. They feel heard and are more likely to get on board.

2

BUT EVERYONE IS GOING OUTSIDE. A LOT

Get kids excited about all of the things they get to do—swimming, neighborhood soccer games, digging in the garden—that are pushed aside during the school months. And explain that being outside

Written by
Elizabeth Jenkins

Illustrations by
Christopher Silas Neal

helps their brains. "Scientists call the sights and sounds of nature 'soft fascination,'" says Palladino. "They stimulate the brain peacefully, so it no longer craves the hyperstimulation of electronics." Research shows improvements in attention spans after time spent outside. Sell this in terms of preparation for the next school year. "I'm so proud of how hard you worked in first grade. Let's keep your body and brain on the right track so you're ready for second!"

3

SCREENS COME OUT ONLY IN THE AFTERNOON

Our minds are sharper in the morning, ready for imaginative fort building or the problem solving needed for setting up a lemonade stand, says Palladino. Also, once kids engage in an activity like watching a show, she says, "they're in a passive, receptive mode. If you start the day that way, you'll wind up going against a stronger current to turn the TV off and get going." Afternoon, after kids have exhausted themselves at the playground *and* when it's hottest, is the time to cave—for a limited time. Or plan for an hour in the evening, as you get dinner ready.

4

THERE WILL BE A (FLEXIBLE) PLAN

Summer should be relaxed, but you can't expect kids to entertain themselves for 12 hours a day (especially without Minecraft as an option). Have a loose schedule. "It's good for them, and it's good for you," says Jenn Mann, a psychologist in Los Angeles and the author of *The A to Z Guide to Raising Happy, Confident Kids.* "Maybe it's hide-and-seek with Mommy in the backyard from 11 to 12, lunch from 12 to 1, and free reading from 1 to 2." Give kids possible activities or projects at the beginning of the week and let them choose. If the day involves errands your child isn't keen on, well, tough. "We all have to do things that aren't our first-choice activity," says Mann. "That's life."

5

"I'M BORED" WON'T GET YOU ANYWHERE

It doesn't mean they won't try. But stand strong: Boredom is important developmentally. It forces creativity. "Having nothing going on and working to invent

an activity is good for their minds," says Dan Siegel, a clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine and a coauthor of *The Whole-Brain Child.* Have a (prebrainstormed) list of activities—one that your child compiles with you—to refer to. And be prepared to participate *initially,* especially with little kids, even if you're just sitting side by side. (You write thank-you notes while your child pens a fairy tale.) "With craft projects, toss out a few ideas, get them going, and then back out," says Bobbi Conner, the author of *The Giant Book of Creativity for Kids.*

6

NO GOING OVER TO SO-AND-SO'S HOUSE TO SNEAK IN XBOX TIME

Because his parents are doing the same thing! Make your summer screen plans a neighborhood or classwide movement—or, at the very least, a shared idea among close friends. "Say, 'We are trying to do more unplugged play at our house,' and then cook up—and agree upon—some alternative activities," says Conner. Pool money to buy new board games (or fly swatters and balloons—see following page for details).

7

MOM AND DAD ARE TAKING A BREAK, TOO

You know your tech habits heavily influence your kids'. Mann says parents need to break down how much quality time they *actually* get with their children. It might be eye-opening. "Even if you're at home, the kids may be at camp, and you've got from 3 P.M. to 8 P.M. with them. That's only five hours," says Mann. "There's no reason you can't put your phone away for that long."

SCREEN-FREE ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES

There's no getting around the fact that setting up a craft project or a backyard dodgeball game is harder work for you than turning on a movie. So the more ideas you have ready to execute, the better. Although preschool and young elementary-school kids are probably your toughest customers (too old for naps, too young for sleepaway camp), any child can stay busy with these ideas.

CRAFT PROJECTS

Paint with old socks. Or the chopsticks from last night's takeout. Or any offbeat things besides brushes, says Erica Young, an early-childhood educator, a mother of two, and a coeditor of motherburg.com. "I roll some butcher paper over a table, squirt a bunch of blobs of paint on it, and let them use their hands, of course, but other weird items, too. Let them drive toy cars through the colors," says Young.

Decorate old or inexpensive furniture. "This summer I plan to let my kids, ages four and six, each paint the wooden chair they sit in at the dinner table. I got them at a garage sale years ago. Why not let the kids personalize them?" says Young.

Make marbleized paper. "This uses shaving cream, and kids love it because it's so kinesthetic and messy," says Karen Kimmel, a cofounder of Crafting Community, a series of family design workshops in the Los Angeles area. How to: Spread shaving cream onto a flat surface (a cutting board works), dot it with a few different colors of liquid watercolor (sold at craft stores—and usually washable), then swirl with a stick. Press a piece of card stock onto the marbleized design, then lift. Scrape off the excess shaving cream with a shower squeegee or a piece of stiff cardboard. Let dry. Go bananas with the remaining shaving cream.

Create felt worlds. Cover a foam board with felt (a hot-glue gun works best, says Kimmel), then cut out shapes, animals, miscellaneous blobs, letters, trees.... "Young kids love making compositions and scenes, and the possibilities are really endless," says Kimmel.

NATURE ACTIVITIES

Construct fairy houses. They're popular, and they cost nothing. "Start by finding the right spot—nestled against a tree usually works great—then use pinecones, pebbles, twigs, bark, and leaves to build a tiny house," says Marcie Cuff, the author of *This Book Was a Tree.* "There really are no rules. Just think *small*."

Go hunting with an empty egg carton. Send kids out to find a dozen interesting objects, one for each divot. Even better: Give each child a magnifying glass, a bag of trail mix, and a water bottle, explorer-style, says Cuff.

Set aside a dirt patch. If you have an underused spot in your yard, let it be a free-to-dig plot for the kids. "We have a small spot outside the kitchen window where the kids have full rein to get their hands dirty," says Cuff. Leave shovels nearby. Bury "gems" (craft-store beads or other shiny items) for them to uncover.

Fill sensory bins. This is ideal for toddlers. Fill a plastic bin with beans or rice, and throw in scoopers and small bowls. Or use cotton balls and plastic tongs. "Many little kids will pour and scoop for ages," says Young. A water bin with ducks and boats also works on a hot day.

BIG-GROUP IDEAS

Play fly-swatter volleyball. This works well if you have a mixed-age crew, says author Bobbi Conner: "Buy a bunch of plastic fly swatters, and blow up a bunch of balloons. Little ones might just swat. Big kids can hit back and forth or tap, tap, tap to see how many times they can do it before the balloon hits the ground. I promise you—this is a winner every single time."

Trade off for outings. "I coordinate with two other moms—seven boys total!—and we take turns hosting the kids," says Leigh Oshirak, a coauthor of *Balance Is a Crock, Sleep Is for the Weak.* "Nerf wars are very popular, or we take hikes. Everyone tends to complain at the thought of it, and then you see a hawk, a deer, or something cool, or you climb a rock. By the time the two-hour hike is over, the kids are exhilarated." (Plus, they're exhausted.) You can host field-day type activities with old-school games—capture the flag, sharks and minnows—or hand out walkie-talkies and send them on a scavenger hunt.

READ, READ, READ

Summer learning loss can be especially tough on early-elementary children who are just learning to read. "Without regular practice, they may go back in the fall and think, At the end of last year, I could read! What happened?" says Daniel Willingham, a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia and the author of *Raising Kids Who Read.* Have books everywhere (a basketful in the kitchen, a pile in the backseat)—wherever your child is most likely to get bored. Read as a family, side by side, during the hottest hours of the afternoon. For the kid with a required list, this sets a "we're in this together" rather than "go do your work" tone. And don't shy away from audiobooks. "They can be a nice alternative to TV—relaxing and good for quiet time. But the vocabulary is richer, and kids are learning more complex content," says Willingham.

RAINY-DAY GO-TOS

Draw a city. Roll butcher paper down a hallway and allow kids to design a metropolis—with roads, buildings, lakes, and amusement parks. Toy cars and trucks can follow the paths.

Set up a secret hideout, whether it's an elaborate fort or a sheet draped over the dining-room chairs. "We created an under-the-basement-stairs hideaway, complete with a mail slot for sending messages—perfection on rainy days," says Cuff. Or try a bubble tent with a duvet cover. Place an empty duvet cover on the floor and button or close up the open end, leaving space to put a small fan that blows in, to puff up the cover into a domelike tent.

Buy grown-up coloring books. Toddlers will be happy with the dollar-store variety, but older kids can get into intricate coloring books aimed at adults, like Johanna Basford's *Secret Garden* or *Enchanted Forest* (sold at bookstores).

Take things apart. "Kids love figuring out how things tick. We're big fans of broken alarm clocks, discarded doorknobs, old wind-up toys, disabled rotary phones," says Cuff. "We disassemble them and investigate." Take notes on what each part might do, try to reassemble the thing, or create something new out of the spare parts. Bonus: Searching the attic for stuff to dismantle might take hours.

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PRETTY SMART

The latest beauty products and tips that save time, money, and—best of all—your sanity.

Written by Jenny Jin
Photographs by Jens Mortensen

STAY WITH ME

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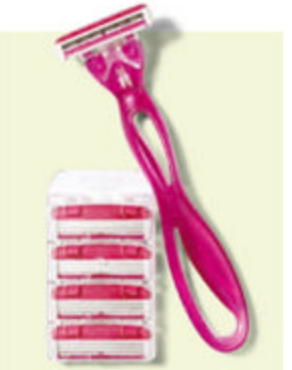
It's on tap

Using the enclosed puff in **Lancôme Miracle Cushion** ($47, lancome-usa.com), press down on the pad (a foundation-soaked sponge) to dispense the ideal dose of color. Smooth onto skin for even, dewy coverage. In 11 shades.

Liquid refreshment

This wand puts the kibosh on clumps. The aptly named **Urban Decay Mascara Resurrection** ($16, urbandecay.com) is a clear, conditioning serum that revives already coated lashes and preps them for a fresh pass of color.

TIP No highlighter? No problem. Reach for your favorite lip balm instead. (Just make sure that it's clear.) Rub onto cheekbones, eyelids, or anywhere you need a little sheen.



Cheat sheet

Infused with polymers and coconut oil, **Nunzio Saviano Anti-Frizz Sheets** ($18 for 12, nunziosaviano.com) eliminate fuzz and add shine to hair with a few swipes. Toss an individually wrapped packet in every purse and desk drawer.

Step to it

There are few things less glamorous than scrubbing your feet. **Sol de Janeiro Samba Two-Step System** ($27, sol dejaneiro.com) comes with a cute file and a thick yet nonslippery cream that makes the process more...appeeling.

Daily double

Genetically blessed with a shiny T-zone and flaky patches? **Eminence Organic Skin Care Balancing Moisturizer Duo** ($68, buynaturalskincare.com) takes care of both. One side houses a mattifying gel; the other holds a hydrating cream.

Snow problem

Feeling the burn? **Hello Kitty Frozen Aloe Cooling Spray** ($7 at drugstores) looks like fresh snow (!) straight out of the can, then melts when you rub it in, instantly soothing skin with aloe and green-tea extracts. Go ahead—buy some "for the kids."

Six-pack

Bic Simply Soleil Click ($5.50, walmart.com) comes with a sturdy handle and six cartridges (each laced with a strip of cocoa butter) so you replace them as they dull to ensure a close crop every time. At under $10, it cuts down on cost, too.

PROP STYLING BY MARIANA VERA

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Written by Jenny Jin

Photograph by Jens Mortensen

1 BEST MULTITASKER

Revlon PhotoReady Insta-Fix Makeup

Testers loved this sleek stick because it glides on without any fuss, melts into skin, and has SPF 20. "I use two different colors so I can contour while covering up," said a staffer. In nine shades.

TO BUY: $14 at drugstores.

2 PRO PICK

Laura Mercier Secret Camouflage

Makeup artists swear by this customizable duo. Mask dark circles with the lighter shade, hide pimples with the darker one, or mix them to create an exact match. In eight combinations.

TO BUY: $34, lauramercier.com.

3 BEST NATURAL

RMS "Un" Cover Up

Made with organic coconut and jojoba-seed oils, this nourishing pot renders blotchy skin smooth and more evenly toned. Bonus: The hydrating formula doesn't settle in fine lines and doubles as foundation. In five shades.

TO BUY: $36, rmsbeauty.com.

4 BEST ALL-AROUND

Nars Radiant Creamy Concealer

From sallow shadows to extreme ruddiness, there is nothing this silky formula can't cover—or reach, thanks to the sponge-tip applicator. "It's my magic eraser," said a tester.

TO BUY: $29, narscosmetics.com.

5 BEST ANTI-AGING

Elizabeth Arden Lift and Firm Concealer

Packed with skin-plumping ceramides and protective antioxidants, this workhorse also has brightening pigments to help disguise any discoloration or fine lines. In four shades.

TO BUY: $20, elizabetharden.com.

6 BEST FOR EYES

Flower D.B. Daily Brightening Cover Crème

The cooling rollerball tip gently depuffs while dispensing lightweight, light-reflective minerals that cast away dark circles without creasing. "It helps me look more awake in the morning," said a tester.

TO BUY: $9, walmart.com.

7 BEST FOR BLEMISHES

Make Up For Ever Full Cover Concealer

A little goes a long way with this pigmented pick. Dab a dot on rogue spots or over stubborn scars for complete coverage that doesn't melt off or fade midday. In 12 shades.

TO BUY: $32, makeupforever.com.

PROP STYLING BY MARIANA VERA

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THE SINGLE-ARM ROW

What it is

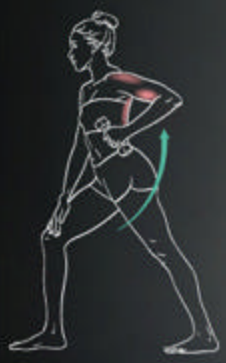
The single-arm row tones the largest muscle of your back, which can minimize the dreaded bra-strap bulge. It works the biceps and the shoulders, too, and so improves your posture by counteracting muscle imbalances created by driving, daily computer use, and other activities, says Joan Pagano, the author of *Strength Training Exercises for Women,* who provided this routine to *Real Simple.* "And it can improve your performance in tennis, golf, and other sports," she adds.

Make it harder

To advance this move, use a heavier dumbbell and a weight bench. Keeping your back flat, put your right knee and right hand on the bench and your left foot on the floor. Without twisting your torso, do 10 reps with your left arm, then switch sides.

Muscles trained

Back, shoulders, and biceps.



How to do it

HOLD a three- to five-pound dumbbell in your left hand.

STAND in a lunge position with your right knee bent over your right ankle and your left leg extended behind you. Your right hand should be resting lightly on your thigh.

LEAN forward from your hips while keeping your back straight. Your left arm should be extended straight down, so that it hangs slightly in front of your shoulder.

EXHALE as you bend your elbow and pull the weight up to your waist. Keep your shoulders square to the front and your arm close to the left side of your body as you pull.

INHALE as you slowly return to the starting position.

REPEAT the move 10 times, then switch sides. Complete two to three sets of 10 moves on each side.

BODY CHECK

① Before you lift the weight, pull your shoulder blade back slightly and keep it engaged as you move. This isolates the muscle groups you're strengthening.
② Avoid leaning too heavily into the hand resting on your thigh. Its purpose is to help you balance, not complete the move.
③ Don't tuck in your chin or tilt your head back. Instead, align your head and spine by looking forward about three feet.

Written by
Kimberly Dawn Neumann

Photograph by
Henry Leutwyler

FASHION STYLING BY ALYSSA DINEEN; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY SUSAN DONOGHUE FOR ENNIS INC. ILLUSTRATION BY REMIE GEOFFROI

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Get (people) smart

Social intelligence can strengthen your relationships, improve your communication skills, and maybe—just maybe—help you figure out what's going on inside your teen's head. Here's how to tap into the power of emotion.

Written by
Yolanda Wikiel

Illustrations by
Anna Parini

"**EMPATHY.**" "People skills." "Catching vibes." Social intelligence, or the ability to recognize other people's emotions—and to use this intel to navigate relationships—has been called many things. It's closely related to emotional intelligence (often abbreviated as EQ or EI), which involves being in touch with your own feelings as well as other people's. Social-intelligence skills can be used for in-person interactions (winning over the grumpy teller at your bank, say) and virtual ones (wording an e-mail to a touchy coworker, for example). "Emotions are data," says David Caruso, Ph.D., a psychologist and a cofounder of EI Skills Group, a Connecticut-based company that trains people in emotional intelligence. "They're a source of information that can reveal the impact you're having on those around you." Once you know that impact, you can adjust your behavior to increase the odds of a smooth, successful interaction.

Hardwired to be social

As the name implies, people skills are part of what makes us human. Research suggests that our brains are now twice as large as those of our *Homo erectus* ancestors because they grew in response to the increasing complexity of human social life. "Our ancestors were the most successful at negotiating the social group, caring for those around them, and even manipulating others for their own advantage," says Nicholas Humphrey, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Darwin College, Cambridge University, and the author of *The Inner Eye*. "Those with the greatest social intelligence and largest brains were the ones who survived to pass down their genes."

Different areas of your brain determine emotional responses. The control regions of the brain's frontal lobes help you stop yourself from saying things that might hurt another person's feelings. (That's why some people who suffer a brain injury lose their internal "filter" and unintentionally say upsetting things to those around them.) Another frontal-lobe region, called the inferior frontal gyrus, helps you figure out what a person's eyes are telling you. And the nucleus accumbens, a part of the central brain's reward circuit, makes you feel good when you help others and feel bad when you hurt someone you care about.

As anyone who has ever caught a coworker's case of the Mondays can attest, emotions can be contagious. Chalk it up to mirror neurons. These cells transmit nerve impulses in your brain when you take action and also when someone else takes the same action (as opposed to regular neurons, which fire either when you do something or when you see someone do something—but never both). The result? Monkey see, monkey feel. That's also why you flinch when you watch a friend stub her toe. "We've evolved to mimic others in order to better understand them and to facilitate our response to them," says Bill von Hippel, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at the University of Queensland, in Australia.

Social intelligence also plays a pivotal role in your health. Numerous studies have shown that people who are socially connected are happier, have lower blood pressure, are less susceptible to colds, and even outlive their more isolated peers. Experts suspect this is largely because strong relationships reduce stress. As Humphrey explains, "If you can't read the signs of what's going on around you, you are likely

to be pulled in different directions, and that is going to raise levels of the stress hormone cortisol." Excess cortisol has been tied to a host of maladies, including weight gain, digestive woes, and a suppressed immune system.

Social know-how may just be the secret ingredient to career success, too. According to a 2014 *Journal of Organizational Behavior* study, employees who are good at reading emotions and use that in addition to others skills, such as networking, tend to have higher incomes. "Emotionally intelligent individuals are more likely to become leaders of a team and demonstrate greater leadership effectiveness," says study coauthor Yongmei Liu, Ph.D., an associate professor at the Illinois State University College of Business. What's more, says Liu, "they are able to interact with coworkers in a way that generates trust and goodwill, and to develop favorable reputations for themselves."

Like many important aspects of life, social intelligence has a dark side. People who are narcissistic, a personality trait characterized by excessive self-love and low empathy, are particularly adept at reading others' emotions—and probably use that ability to manipulate people to get their way, according to a 2014 study published in *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*. But narcissists be warned: "Having the intelligence to get the better of others pays off in the short term. But in the long run, it will ruin your reputation if you plan to continue working and living with that community," notes Humphrey.

The art of reading people

Certain individuals seem to be born with social intelligence. But for most of us, it's something that's developed—or stunted—over time. If your parents instructed you not to cry when you were a child or were prone to saying "It's fine" when things were anything but, you might be less perceptive than you would have been had your family hashed out how they were feeling over the dinner table, says Caruso. (There are some exceptions: People on the autism spectrum, for example, may have a difficult time detecting emotional nuances.)

Your day-to-day activities also affect your level of social intelligence. The more time you spend glued to a screen, the less likely you are to decipher other people's social cues accurately or even to pick up on them in the first place. Last year, a study published in *Computers in Human Behavior* found that sixth graders who went to an outdoor camp and gave up smartphones, iPads, and television cold turkey for just five days were substantially better at reading human emotions than were sixth graders from the same school who didn't go to the camp and give up the digital devices. Adults respond the same. "Technology provides limited [emotional] information and therefore doesn't offer much of an opportunity for you to practice reading and reacting to others' emotions," says Liu.

Even if you think that you are fairly good at dealing with people, social competence is some-

5 EXERCISES TO IMPROVE YOUR EMOTIONAL LITERACY

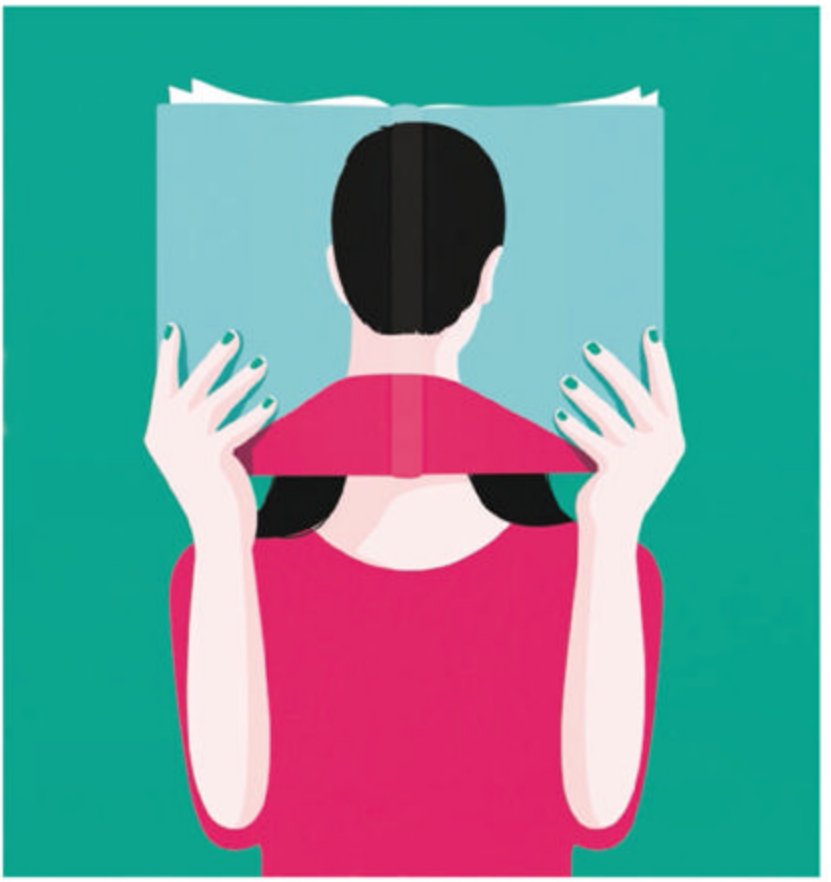
1. WATCH NETFLIX ON MUTE. The next time you kick back with *House of Cards,* turn the sound off and guess what's going on between the characters. Then rewind the scene to see if you nailed it. Choose a respected drama rather than a comedy or reality TV. "This trick works only if the show or film stars excellent actors who understand the subtleties of nonverbal language," says psychologist David Caruso.

2. READ GREAT NOVELS. According to a 2013 study published in *Science,* people who read literary fiction display higher levels of empathy and ability to understand others' beliefs and emotions than do those who prefer nonfiction or breezy novels. In renowned works of fiction, you're exposed to richer character development and a deeper exploration of their inner lives, say the study authors.

3. ASK FOR FEEDBACK. The only way to know for sure that you've accurately read someone's demeanor is to check in with her. Once you think you've got a read on someone, ask questions like "You seem pleased. Is that right?" or "Did you really agree with my presentation?" Be pleasant and low-key when asking and you're more likely to receive a candid response, says Caruso.

4. GET SOME SLEEP. Not only will you be less bleary-eyed and grumpy—making it easier to pick up on social cues and behave empathetically—but you'll also have more time to dream, which can deepen your ability to imagine yourself in someone else's shoes. "One of the most important functions of dreaming is it allows us to experiment with social situations that we have not yet experienced," says psychologist Nicholas Humphrey.

5. PEER INTO THE WINDOWS TO THE SOUL. Eyes can reveal a range of feelings. To see how good you are at discerning jealousy, arrogance, and other emotions just by looking at a person's eyes, take a free online quiz (part of an ongoing study by Harvard University researchers) at socialintelligence.labinthewild.org/mite.



thing you can—and should—continue to cultivate throughout your life. Whether you're face-to-face or trying to decipher a digital message, here are the emotional detective skills that can make all encounters more informative and successful.

IN PERSON

BE A BLANK SLATE. Before attempting to get a read on someone, you must have an open mind yourself. "Your own emotions and your previous experiences with another person can color your impressions, and that may lead you to misread the situation," says Blanca Cobb, the founder of Truth Blazer, a Greensboro, North Carolina–based firm that consults on body language. Try to approach every interaction, no matter what your shared history, objectively, says Cobb.

CHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER. When it comes to social intelligence, small talk serves a big purpose: With both strangers and those you've known for years, seemingly pointless chitchat gives you an opportunity to familiarize yourself with the other person's baseline—that is, his or her neutral disposition—so you can accurately spot behavior that's out of the ordinary. Does your conversation partner twirl her hair when she's relaxed? Talk with her hands? Avoid consistent eye contact? "When you switch the topic and notice a blip in the baseline, that's when you go, *Aha!*" says Cobb. Vocal variances, like a change in pitch, pace, or even hesitation, can be a tip-off that a person's emotions have shifted.

FOCUS ON THE BIG PICTURE. A colleague who crosses her arms across her chest might be defensive—or she might be trying to stay warm. Rather than zeroing in on individual gestures, do a comprehensive scan of the other person's body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, and use of words, and form a hypothesis only if most signs point to the same thing.

ON A SCREEN

SKEW POSITIVE. A 2008 paper from Syracuse University said that e-mails meant to be neutral may be interpreted as negative, while positive messages can be read as neutral. Blame it on the ambiguity of the written language. "Because texts, social-media messages, and e-mail aren't softened up with body language, words often come across extra direct and harsh," says David B. Givens, Ph.D., the director of the Center for Nonverbal Studies, in Spokane, Washington. To counteract this over-reading, when someone types, "Yeah, sure," try to assume that it's sincere rather than brimming with sarcasm. Or, better yet, be direct and ask for clarification.

LOOK FOR A PERSONAL TONE. According to a 2003 study published in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* when a person is being deceptive, he is less likely to "own" his story. He uses fewer first-person pronouns *(I, me, mine)* and exclusive words *(but, without, except)* and more negations *(no, never, none)* compared with people who are telling the truth. For instance, a trustworthy e-mail might say, "I did all of my math homework except for the last set of questions," whereas a lie is more likely to be phrased, "Homework's done."

SCAN SOCIAL MEDIA FOR QUESTIONS. Yes, everyone's life looks airbrushed on the Internet. But when your friends and colleagues do express negative emotions online, it may not be with a frowning emoji. "When people are sad or depressed, they tend to have a much stronger self-focus and often use the words *I* and *me* and interrogatives like *why* and *how* on Facebook and Twitter," say Gregory Park, Ph.D., a quantitative-personality psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania. That may be because they're looking for support and for others to lift them out of their mood, says Park.

MEET THE BLOGGER: **BRITTANY MULLINS**

a List BLOGGER NETWORK REAL SIMPLE

Brittany Mullins is a health coach and certified NASM personal trainer who has been blogging about healthy living since 2008. She is a lover of all things food, nutrition, and fitness. Through her blog, Eating Bird Food, she proves that maintaining a healthy lifestyle doesn't have to be a challenge by sharing healthy and satisfying recipes, fitness activities, and snippets from her daily life. With her coaching, she focuses on nourishing the body with whole foods, daily movement, moderation, and balance—four things that she believes are key to creating long-lasting health and happiness.

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PRECIOUS LITTLE

The biggest thing in jewelry? Tiny-yet-remarkable pieces you'll never want to (or have to) take off.

Written by
Rebecca Daly

Photographs by
Jens Mortensen

NECKLACES

Dress up everything from a plain white T-shirt to a little black dress with one of these subtle, sparkly strands.

1 CYNTHIA RYBAKOFF necklace of pearls and gold plate, $78, cynthiarybakoff.com.

2 PASCALE MONVOISIN pendant of gold, moonstone, and inset diamond, $368, intermix online.com.

3 ADINA REYTER gold-and-diamond lariat, $475, adinadesign.com.

4 SMITH + MARA sterling-silver necklace, $165, smithandmara.com.

PROP STYLING BY ERIN SWIFT

BRACELETS AND RINGS

One piece worn alone looks like a treasured family heirloom. Try stacking a few if you want to make a stronger statement.

1 ALEX MIKA cuff of white sapphires and rose-gold plate, $158, alexmikajewelry.com.

2 GRACE LEE rose-gold ring, $385, stevenalan.com.

3 STELLA AND BOW ring of gold plate and black spinel, $80, stellaandbow.com.

4 RUE GEMBON rings of gold plate and crystals, $55 for the set, ruegembon.com.

5 LAGOS 18-karat-gold bangle, $800, lagos.com.

6 JULES SMITH cuff of gold plate and crystals, $55, julessmithdesigns.com.

7 HOUSE OF HARLOW 1960 gold-tone bracelet, $68, houseofharlow1960.com.

8 PANDORA sterling-silver rings, $50 each, pandora.com.

9 SWAROVSKI gold-plated bangles, $125 for the set, swarovski.com.

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2 SUZ SOMERSALL gold-vermeil earrings, $200, suzsomersall.com.

3 CYNTHIA RYBAKOFF gold-plated studs, $58, cynthia rybakoff.com.

4 ADINA REYTER earrings of sterling silver and diamonds, $198, adinadesign.com.

5 CC SKYE gold-plated earrings with crystals, $78, amazon.com.

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THE BEST FASHION ADVICE OF ALL TIME

Pale pink, leopard print, the right bra, a little skin. Fashion-industry insiders share their best wisdom on the elements of great style.

Written by
Ingela Ratledge

Photographs by
Jessica Antola

"A white shirt is always perfect for any occasion. It makes women look seductive and snappy. But it must be crisp."

—CAROLINA HERRERA, fashion designer

Thomas Pink blouse. Citizens of Humanity Vintage Collection jeans. Cynthia Rybakoff studs.

For buying information for the clothes and accessories featured on these pages, see Credits (last pages).

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY SHOPIE HAIG USING CHANEL ROUGE ALLURE AT BA-REPS

let's

face it: Some fashion axioms are so well-worn, they're practically branded into our brains. But applying them to everyday life—when you're, say, trying to pick a dress from an endless sea of search results, or running 20 minutes late and staring down the barrel of a hostile closet? Well, that can be a little tricky. *Real Simple* consulted a panel of experts—top designers, style consultants, and retail pros—to demystify the act (art?) of getting dressed, once and for all.

FASHION ADVICE

"BALANCE PROPORTIONS."

HOW TO ACTUALLY DO IT: As the old song goes, "You've got to accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative." Obviously, you want to show off what you're proud of—toned arms or a slim waist. It's the downplaying of less beloved parts that's tricky. One tactic? Add opposite volume, like wearing wide-leg trousers to offset a heavier upper half that's wearing something fitted. "The object is to even yourself out," explains designer Nicole Miller. "So avoid anything too oversize or you'll look bigger." Another idea: Distraction. If you're pear shaped, wear forgettable black pants, then bring the focus upward with a bold scarf, says Louise Roe, the author of the style-advice book *Front Roe*.

FASHION ADVICE

"WEAR TRENDS IN AN AGE-APPROPRIATE WAY."

HOW TO ACTUALLY DO IT: Odds are, there's a grown-up version of the style du jour. Take crops tops: To avoid revealing skin, pair a shirt that hits at the navel with a high-waisted skirt—or a longer top with a crop top over it. "It gives you a similar look," promises designer Rebecca Minkoff. Bottom line: "You never want to seem like you're uncomfortable with your age and trying to look younger," says Lilliana Vazquez, a style expert and the editor of TheLVGuide.com.

"Every woman looks good in pale pink. To find the right one for you, try on different shades the same way you would shop for blush at the makeup counter."

—BETTY HALBREICH, personal shopper at New York City's Bergdorf Goodman since 1976

Autumn Cashmere sweater. Suz Somersall studs.

White shirt 101

Hands-on how-to's from Florence Thomas, the creative director for Thomas Pink.

- **Opt for a pure white, rather than ivory, which may skew dingy. But since white has the potential to make your teeth look yellow in comparison, consider wearing a bold lipstick with a blue undertone, like fuchsia, so teeth appear brighter.**
- **Not sure which cut is best for you? A button-up with darting at the waist or curved princess seams can create a feminine hourglass shape on anyone.**
- **Key factors of an impeccable fit: Be sure the seams of the shoulders line up with your shoulders and that there is no pulling across the front or the back. Anything else can be tailored.**
- **To keep all-cotton shirts from discoloring, don't dry-clean them. Have them laundered and pressed, the same as men's shirts.**

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FASHION ADVICE

"THE RIGHT BRA MAKES YOU LOOK SLIMMER."

HOW TO ACTUALLY DO IT: "Where your breasts sit on your chest makes a big difference in how clothes fit," says Vazquez. In other words, if you're wearing a bra that fits properly, there will be no sagging or bulging—and that means your silhouette will look trimmer and neater from every angle. The target is midway between your elbows and shoulders, so the bust doesn't blend into the stomach. You've scored a match when "the front center panel of the bra lays flat, there's no wrinkling or gapping in the cups, and the bra is not hiking up or creating bulges," says Kristen Supulski, the director of merchandising for Vanity Fair Brands lingerie. "If you can squeeze just two fingers under the band and it still feels snug, that's the perfect fit." Finding it may require kissing a few frogs: Sizing varies among brands (particularly between European and American labels), so not all 36C's are created equal. Supulski advises getting professionally measured once a year or so. Before you balk at the nuisance, keep in mind that an estimated 80 percent of women are wearing the wrong size, due to everything from changes in weight and fluctuations in hormones to, well, gravity.

"Smaller patterns are better at hiding lumps and bumps than large prints and solids."

—LOUISE ROE, fashion writer

FASHION ADVICE

"DON'T BE TOO MATCHY-MATCHY."

HOW TO ACTUALLY DO IT: Strive to wear colors that enhance one another rather than "match" in the traditional sense. What's the difference? Perfectly coordinated pieces can make an outfit look flat and predictable. Picture a gray dress with gray or black pumps—acceptable, but not exactly interesting. When done right, *not* matching creates an ensemble

"When you bring in multiple items at once for tailoring, it puts you in a position to negotiate. It's reasonable to request 10 to 15 percent off the total bill."

—LILLIANA VAZQUEZ, style expert

Zara top. Banana Republic pants. & Other Stories earrings.

Mix prints—without looking like a seven-year-old

Doubling up on patterns can help you come across as confident and chic—or as if you got dressed in the dark. Achieve the former by following these guidelines.

- **Stick to a similar color family—and preferably the same background shade.**
- **Some pairings are like PB & J—they just work. "Polka dots with stripes or florals typically go well together," says Rebecca Minkoff. The same holds for leopard print with a noncritter pattern or paisley with squares or checks.**
- **Near matches are a no-no. For example, says Lilliana Vazquez, houndstooth and plaid are too similar to be simpatico. And two large-scale prints will compete for dominance—and give people a headache.**
- **Finish off the outfit with neutral accessories. Cautions Louise Roe: "Don't add another color into the mix."**

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"Treat leopard print as a neutral—it goes with pretty much everything."
—AERIN LAUDER, founder and creative director of Aerin

The Row dress. L.K. Bennett clutch. Banana Republic heels. Suz Somersall earrings.

that pops. For an easy hack, says Minkoff, "look at a simple color wheel. The colors that are opposite each other on the wheel complement each other." (Think non-obvious but fetching combos, like orange and navy or purple and saffron.) Diversifying your accessories, in both color and texture, is another do. "You're better off with a snakeskin bag, a patent-leather belt, and black suede shoes than an exact match," says footwear designer Stuart Weitzman. (A beloved trio from the vault of Betty Halbreich, a personal shopper at New York City's Bergdorf Goodman and the author of the style memoir *I'll Drink to That:* "A black dress, navy shoes, and a burgundy handbag.") And under no circumstances should you ever rock a suite of jewelry. Says Vazquez, "Anything that was sold together as a set looks really dated."

"One of the biggest indicators of whether your shoes are current is the toe shape, which changes fashion all the time. That's why peep-toes never go out of style."
—STUART WEITZMAN, footwear designer

FASHION ADVICE

"SHOW SKIN SELECTIVELY."

HOW TO ACTUALLY DO IT: "Don't give people too many things to look at all at once," says Halbreich. "If you're wearing a low-cut dress, focus on the cleavage—you don't also need bare arms and legs." The concept applies to fit as well: A body-hugging dress is better with a more sensible neckline and hem, whereas a skirt that hits a few inches above the knee won't raise eyebrows if it's flared rather than tight. The point is to leave something to the imagination. Take, for example, a long-sleeve sheer blouse. If it's layered with the proper undergarment, others will see the suggestion of skin, but you aren't revealing anything.

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FASHION ADVICE

"SPEND AS MUCH AS YOU CAN AFFORD ON STAPLES."

HOW TO ACTUALLY DO IT: First, a disclaimer. There's no need to break the bank on the basics—tees, button-downs, jeans—of which there are plenty of quality options available at low prices. Instead, splurge (if you can) on the types of items in which even the cheapo versions aren't exactly steals. For instance, bargain cashmere will still set you back $100. But that sweater will stretch out quickly, and then you'll have to blow another $100 to replace it, rather than spending a little more only once. "When buying classics, like a great black blazer, it's important to invest in better fabrics—say, wool—that will hold up better over time," says Minkoff. Same goes for footwear: "Cheap shoes can start to lose their shape after only two to three wearings," says Weitzman. And try calculating the price per wear to help stave off sticker shock. If you live in a cold climate, say, your entire social network will probably see your winter coat at some point before the thaw. Says Halbreich: "I'm not a believer in spending a lot on an evening dress that's just a one-night stand. But a divine leather jacket or some wonderful embroidered coat you're going to keep forever?"

"The key to stylish layering starts with the foundation. My favorite underpinnings have an asymmetrical hem that lays at the lower hip."

—EILEEN FISHER, fashion designer

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FASHION ADVICE

"DEVELOP A SIGNATURE STYLE."

HOW TO ACTUALLY DO IT: "Figure out your go-to, foolproof looks," says designer Nanette Lepore, then seek out variations on that theme. Stumped? Picture the outfits that you feel most comfortable in. Or ask people close to you what you look best in. Once you've zeroed in on what works, find different takes. "I gravitate toward jackets, so I'll do a bomber style, then a silk version, or a denim jacket with leather sleeves," says Minkoff. Maybe you're at your best in sharp menswear trousers, or you favor floaty tunics and boho maxis. Regardless, this isn't about concocting some alter ego; it's about honoring your core aesthetic, sort of like the way a designer comes up with a collection every season.

"Whenever you feel the need to talk yourself into things, that's a red flag that you shouldn't buy them," says Minkoff. Homing in on your personal style should come naturally if you take the time to stop and look. If you have doubts in the dressing room, it may help to take a photo of yourself in the item, suggests Aerin Lauder, the founder and creative director of the lifestyle brand Aerin. "It's much more accurate than looking in the mirror."

Long earrings make your face look skinnier...

...and other gems of wisdom from jewelry designer Lizzie Fortunato.

- On the other hand, if you have an oblong face, short, chunky earrings, like oversize studs, will draw focus outward, and your face won't read quite as narrow.
- If you have a large bust, a necklace should hit an inch above the cleavage or higher. Longer strands or pendants will rest awkwardly on the body and call attention to every contour.
- The worst thing you can do is store jewelry, particularly costume pieces, in the bathroom. The moisture will wear off plating quickly. Stash baubles in your bedroom in a dust bag or a zippered plastic bag along with a small piece of cloth.
- Choose earrings in lighter colors, such as pearls or white stone, to make your face look radiant.
- To make costume jewelry appear more expensive than it is, have the piece rest against clothing—say, fastened over the collar of a shirt—rather than on bare skin. This will create a more refined look.

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Work & Money

THE VIEW FROM HERE

Phyllis Newhouse was a single mom who had logged 22 years in the military when she decided to start her own business. In 2002 she launched Xtreme Solutions, a tech company that helps prevent cyber attacks. Within two years, the business had broken $1 million in revenue. This year, it's on track to gross about $60 million. Newhouse, 53, spoke with *Real Simple* about the (not always steady) march to entrepreneurship.

PHYLLIS NEWHOUSE
- CEO and founder of Xtreme Solutions, Inc.
- Atlanta

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEREK BLANKS

Written by Jane Porter

What was your childhood like?
I'm number 10 in a family of 11 children. My mother was the biggest influence in my life and still is today. She came up through the civil rights movement and some tough times, working several jobs. She saw something in all of us. When she needed someone to round up all the kids for dinner, she'd send me. She's said, "When you were young, I knew you were born to lead."

Did you have a dream job as a kid?
I had a really good friend whose father owned a huge electronics store in Charlotte. I was about 10 years old when I was exposed to that, and it somehow stuck in my head that I wanted to be an entrepreneur.

You were 18 when you joined the army.
Until then, I had never left North Carolina in my life. At the time, women were just beginning to get the chance to go into different career fields [besides administrative] in the military. That motivated me.

You stayed for more than two decades.
Initially I thought I would do four years, get some army college-fund money, and get out. But I realized I was four or five years ahead of my peers [at home] in terms of life experience. I had traveled the world. I was always working toward the next leadership position. I went back to school and finished while I was still in the military.

A lot of people picture the military as marching and fighting.
People think it's an all-combat job. I was responsible for the process of attracting and appointing candidates. That's marketing, research, and security.

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Military recruiting is very complex. There are more than 25,000 soldiers worldwide who work in recruiting. It's like having regional offices, then having one major corporate headquarters. I worked at the corporate level, at the Pentagon.

How did motherhood affect your job?
Having personal responsibility outside of myself made me realize that you don't always have to compete at the highest level. I'd been in the military 18 years when I had my son. When he was six months old, I was supposed to attend a seven-month leadership academy, and you could not take your children. For the first time in my career, I made a decision to decline.

Soon you became a single mom.
If you ever want to go through hell, do it all at one time. When my son was two [he's now 19], I went through a divorce. I transitioned out of the military. I started a business. That's a lot of hell.

How did you manage?
I thought, *What do I want to be in three years?* and wrote that plan out. I knew that I was going to be an entrepreneur, so I started to prep, taking courses and researching businesses.

> **"On a blank bulletin board, I put a picture of a building, a check I wrote to myself for $1 million, and the names of people I would have on my ideal team. I could see my company."**

What came next?
I remember getting a blank bulletin board. On that board, I put a picture of a building; I put a check I wrote to myself for $1 million; I put the names of organizations I wanted to work with. Then I started putting people's names on there—the ideal team. I looked at that board every day, and there was my company—I could see it.

A lot of those details came to pass.
Within a year, three of the people on that board were working for me. Within two years, I was in that actual building in downtown Atlanta. When I wrote the $1 million check, I said that within three years, this was what I wanted to see in our bank account. In two years, it was in there. Every year, I go back to that vision board and put new things on it.

How much sleep do you get?
Oh, God. The truth? On average, about four hours. In the military, you get up at 4:30 and you're out running at 5. I've never been able to turn that clock off. I still get up early and run two or three miles every day.

Your company helps protect organizations from cyber attacks. How did that idea come to you?
In the recruiting command, you have data like Social Security numbers and birthdays. I saw how critical it was to protect networks. I also saw that a lot of organizations were afraid of an attack.

You have more than 300 employees. What's it like to work with you?
We have an accountability meeting every month. You have to get up and tell me three things: how you plan to be impactful as a leader over the next 90 days, what you've done in the last 90 days that was impactful, and what value you hope to bring to the organization over 90 days. I also have to stand up and say these three things. I would never ask someone to tell me something I'm not willing to tell them.

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Travel-cost smackdown: myth vs. fact

With the average summer vacation running $1,246 a head (according to 2014 research from American Express), getting away isn't cheap. *Real Simple* investigated classic money-saving travel advice to uncover the tips that truly make a difference.

MYTH: The best airfare deals are available on Tuesdays.
FACT: Actually, you're generally going to find the lowest prices if you buy coach seats on a Sunday. A 2014 study conducted by the Airlines Reporting Corporation, a ticket-transaction organization, found that domestic tickets purchased on Sundays 50 to 100 days prior to travel cost an average of $110 less than the overall average ticket price. If you want to book a trip to a U.S. destination, like Orlando (hello, Mickey!), do it exactly 57 days in advance—to save an average of 19 percent off the typical fare.

MYTH: The free upgrade is always worth taking.
FACT: Checking into a suite for the price of a single room is a steal. But that freebie at the Hertz counter? Maybe not. Tooling around in, say, a roomy SUV instead of the compact that you reserved is going to cost you in fuel, says Seth Kugel, a frugal-traveler columnist for the *New York Times.* If you want to make sure you avoid the old *unsolicited* switcheroo, Kugel recommends calling the rental office where you'll be picking up the vehicle to verify that it will save the exact car you reserved.

MYTH: All-inclusive vacations are a scam.
FACT: Not always. If you book a getaway to an all-inclusive resort in the Caribbean or Mexico, chances are there won't be extra charges for things like alcohol, paddleboard equipment, or specialty dinners. The time to watch out, though, is on a cruise. That's when "all-inclusive" might have a fuzzy definition. "Cruise lines know that you're a captive audience. So while booking the trip may not cost a lot, you can rack up lots of additional charges for things like shore excursions and meals," says Pauline Frommer, the editorial director of the Frommer's guidebooks. Investigate details carefully.

MYTH: Hostels are only for backpacking college students.
FACT: Maybe due to competition from options like Airbnb, some hostels have recently enjoyed a surprising upgrade—even as they maintain their budget pricing. "A lot of hostels are downright chic in looks and amenities," says Frommer. Many now feature private family rooms with two bunk beds. Some hostels offer waterfront views, Wi-Fi, and free breakfast. Book a private room at one and you could pay 50 percent less than what you would for a hotel room. Go to roughguides.com or hostelworld.com for reviews.

Written by
Ashley Tate
Illustration by
Eight Hour Day

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Getting unstuck at work

Is the highlight of your day a trip to the vending machine? Career expert Anne Kreamer, the author of *Risk/Reward*, offers tips for climbing out of a rut.

1

Go *toward* the anxiety.
"When you're underutilized, you're bored," says Kreamer, who calls for ongoing risk taking. "We can become paralyzed by the fear of royally screwing up, but inertia is its own kind of misery. Dip into a place that feels a little bit uncomfortable so you're prompted to bring your A game." Jump on challenging assignments, even if it causes you stress, she says: "Careers don't operate best on cruise control."

2

Be a morning person.
Numerous academic studies confirm the magic of morning. "The more decisions people make throughout the day, the more exhausted and resistant they can become," says Kreamer. "If you want to pitch a new project or ask for more responsibility, do so in the morning. Sunshine helps, too." A bright sky "might put your boss in a better mood," she says, "increasing the odds that she'll give you the go-ahead."

3

See the forest, not just the trees.
Kreamer talks about using "soft eyes" to take in peripheral surroundings, so you're relaxed but alert. In the workplace, this means leaning back from the grind once a day to notice excitement on the horizon. "The point is to see what might be coming at your company in a month or a year, so you don't miss out," she says. "Staying aware means you're ready to act when you need to."

—Nicole Sforza

PORTRAIT BY SARAH MAYCOCK

ASK BUCKY

TIME INC.'S* ALL-KNOWING, STRAIGHT-SHOOTING VICE PRESIDENT OF STAFFING, BUCKY KEADY, TACKLES YOUR WORKPLACE CONUNDRUMS.

What's appropriate summer attire in a less formal office? And what do you say to an underling who crosses the line?

In a loose, creative environment, you can get away with more casual clothing and showing some skin. But dressing provocatively is, well, *provocative*, and it's never OK. All the essentials should be covered up. (Do the bend-forward test before leaving home: If there's a reveal at the neckline or in back, you need to change.) There are certain trends to think about—like allowing bra straps to show. If you're in that kind of industry, go for it. But be sure it's a fashion statement, not just bad undergarments. As for confronting an underling, I would be gentle but offer a concrete directive: "I feel your outfit might be a little too beachy. Maybe you want to borrow a sweater from a friend."

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1 Knockaround sunglasses, $20.
2 Flower Beauty Transforming Touch Powder-to-Crème Blush in Tickled Pink, $13.
3 Kenneth Cole wedges, $79.
4 Rebecca Minkoff clutch, $95.

FOR COMPLETE SHOPPING INFORMATION, SEE CREDITS (PAGE 170).

IT'S EASY TO SPLASH OUT ON SUMMER STYLE WHEN IT'S SO, WELL, CHEAP. 100 EASY, BREEZY PIECES STARTING AT JUST $3.

Photographs by Travis Rathbone
Prop Styling by Ariana Salvato

5 Essie Nail Polish in Blanc, $8.50. 6 NYC New York Color City Proof 24 Hr Waterproof Eye Shadow in Rockefeller Center Snowflakes, $3. 7 Lydell NYC necklace, $92. 8 Tommy Hilfiger espadrilles, $69. 9 Dillard's top, $44. 10 Eva Mendes for NY&Co. skirt, $60. 11 Cooper & Ella top, $98. 12 Guess ring, $18. 13 Lulu's handbag, $36. 14 Stila Jewel Eye Shadow in Opal, $20. 15 NYX High Definition Finishing Powder in Translucent, $10. 16 NYX White Liquid Liner, $7. 17 MMS Design Studio clutch, $50. 18 Miss Finch skirt, $60. 19 Knockaround sunglasses, $25. 20 Vanilla Beach swimsuit top, $25, and bottom, $20. 21 Zara dress, $100. 22 Express watch, $88. 23 Shoedazzle sandals, $40. 24 Banana Republic jellies, $60. 25 Sally Hansen I Heart Nail Art Pen in Pearly White, $6. 26 BCBGMaxAzria peplum top, $98.

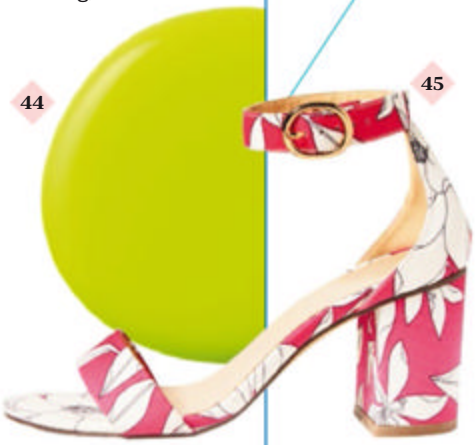
Photographs by Philip Friedman

SOFT STYLING BY MAI TRAN

WHITE-HOT

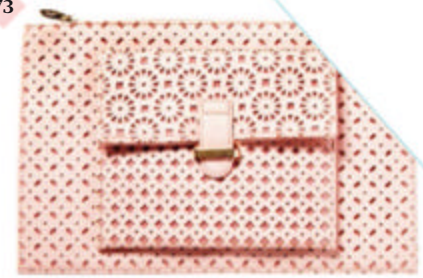
27 The Box Bag clutch, $99.
28 Ted Baker sandals at Zappos, $95.

butter



BRIGHT IDEAS

50 Carolee bangle, $45.
51 Shoedazzle heels, $40.



52 Rituals Duo Eyeshadow in 11, $25. 53 Coco Loves Rome earrings, $20. 54 Bobbi Brown Shimmer Lip Gloss in Spun Gold, $25. 55 Gap shirtdress, $70. 56 Aerie hat, $25. 57 Abercombie & Fitch top, $38. 58 Ann Taylor lace top, $59. 59 See Eyewear sunglasses, $99. 60 Marshalls bucket bag, $40. 61 Report Signature flats, $60. 62 J. McLaughlin scarf, $85. 63 Danielle Stevens Jewelry bracelet, $30. 64 Old Navy shorts, $30. 65 Cost Plus World Market necklace, $15. 66 Darling pants, $88. 67 Clinique Chubby Stick Baby Tint Moisturizing Lip Color in Flowering Freesia, $17. 68 Zara pumps, $90. 69 Londontown lakur in Avon Gorge, $16. 70 Vanilla Beach swimsuit, $45. 71 Loren Hope earrings, $58. 72 525 America sweater, $78. 73 Nila Anthony clutch, $38. 74 Clarins Instant Light Lip Balm Perfector in My Pink, $23. 75 Ann Taylor scarf, $40. 76 Emi Jay pastel leather bows in Pistachio, Aquamarine, and Strawberry Sorbet, $14 each.

COOL DUDS

77 Charles David sandals, $79.
78 Missguided clutch, $36.

79 Banana Republic top, $60. 80 Boden sandals, $88. 81 MAC Cosmetics Le Disko Dazzleshadow in She Sparkles, $21. 82 Ardency Inn Modster Smooth Ride Supercharged Eyeliner in Gold, $19. 83 R.J. Graziano cuff, $35. 84 Pono by Joan Goodman bangles, $95 for set. 85 Galian bucket bag, $73. 86 H&M dress, $70. 87 Circa Optical Illusion Lash Lengthening Mascara in Black, $11. 88 La Mer Collections watch, $98. 89 Milani Baked Bronzer in Glow, $10. 90 Erin McDermott Jewelry necklace, $88. 91 White House Black Market tank, $94. 92 BCBGeneration sandals at Zappos, $79. 93 Forever 21 heels, $30. 94 Scunci No Slip Grip All Day Hold bobby pins, $3.50 for 48. 95 James Read BB Tan Pen, $30. 96 Marshalls handbag, $50. 97 OPI Nail Lacquer in Glitzerland, $10. 98 Jewelry Habit cuff, $30.

99 Adia Kibur ring, $46.
100 Nars Eye Paint in Interstellar and Iskandar, $25 each.

GLOWING REVIEW

DISHES THAT HOLD UP IN THE HEAT = PICNIC SUCCESS. A FRUIT CUP WITH COCONUT CREAM IS REFRESHING—AND MELTPROOF.

LIFE'S A PICNIC...

...when you make that picnic a potluck. These outdoor-party plans take the work off your (unbreakable) plate.

Recipes by Justin Chapple, Kay Chun, and Ben Mims Written by Genevieve Ko
Photographs by Roland Bello Food Styling by Maggie Ruggiero Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller

SET IT (OUT) AND FORGET IT SOUTHERN BUFFET

With these laid-back crowd-pleasers, guests (not you!) are responsible for assembling their sliders and dressing up their desserts. Make the pork a day ahead and reheat on the stovetop; serve warm or at room temperature.

Watercress salad with olives and tomatoes

HANDS-ON TIME: **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **25 MINUTES**
SERVES **12**

- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced lengthwise
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- ¼ cup fresh oregano leaves
- 2 bunches watercress (12 ounces), thick stems discarded, coarsely chopped
- 5 ounces mixed salad greens
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ⅓ cup pitted kalamata olives
- 6 ounces ricotta salata or Feta, thinly sliced

STIR the olive oil, lemon juice, shallots, and ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a small bowl. Finely chop half the oregano and stir into the dressing. Let stand for 10 minutes to soften the shallots.

MEANWHILE, top the watercress and greens with the tomatoes, olives, ricotta salata, and the remaining oregano. Serve alongside the dressing.

Beer-braised pulled-pork sliders with fresh salsa

HANDS-ON TIME: **35 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **5½ HOURS (PLUS OVERNIGHT MARINATING)**
SERVES **12**

- 1 6-pound boneless pork shoulder
- 11 cloves garlic
- 2 12-ounce bottles Mexican beer (such as Corona)
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 fresh hot red chili, halved and seeded
- 2 tomatoes, halved crosswise and seeded
- 1 small yellow onion, halved and rinsed
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons honey
- Slider buns, for serving

TRIM the excess fat off the pork, leaving a thin layer on top. Poke all over with a knife; place in a large bowl. Puree 10 of the garlic cloves with the beer in a blender. Pour over the pork, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate overnight.

HEAT oven to 325° F. Place the pork fat-side up in a roasting pan. Add the beer marinade. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons salt and 2 teaspoons pepper all over the meat. Cover with foil and bake until fork-tender, about 4 hours.

MEANWHILE, grate the chili and the remaining garlic clove on the small holes of a box grater set over a bowl, then grate the tomatoes and onion on the large holes. Stir in the lime juice, honey, and 1 teaspoon salt. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

UNCOVER the pork. Spoon off the excess fat. Heat broiler. Broil the pork until the top is crisp, about 6 minutes. Cool for 20 minutes.

SHRED the pork and toss with its juices. Serve with the buns and salsa.

Cheesy corn bread

HANDS-ON TIME: **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1 HOUR**
SERVES **12**

- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, melted, plus more for the pan
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan
- 2½ cups yellow cornmeal
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 3 cups buttermilk
- 3 large eggs
- 10 ounces mozzarella, cut into ½-inch cubes (2 cups)

HEAT oven to 400° F. Butter a 9-by-13-inch cake pan; dust with flour.

WHISK the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cayenne in a bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk the butter, buttermilk, and eggs, then stir in the cheese. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until combined. Spread evenly in the prepared pan.

BAKE until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool in the pan until warm. Cut into squares.

Summer ambrosia cups

HANDS-ON TIME: **35 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1 HOUR, 35 MINUTES**
SERVES **12**

- 3 peaches, pitted and thinly sliced
- 3 nectarines, pitted and thinly sliced
- 3 apricots, pitted and thinly sliced
- ¾ cup sweetened coconut cream
- 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1 cup cherries, halved and pitted
- Honey, for serving

COMBINE the peaches, nectarines, and apricots in a large bowl.

MIX the coconut cream and orange juice in a medium bowl and pour over the fruit. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

MEANWHILE, toast the coconut flakes in a medium skillet over medium heat, tossing, until golden brown, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a bowl to cool completely.

TO SERVE, let guests spoon the fruit and coconut cream mixture into cups and top it with the toasted coconut, cherries, and honey.

POTLUCK BEST PRACTICES

Assigning specific dishes to willing friends keeps everything cohesive instead of hodgepodge. Use one of these menus—all of the recipes taste good at room temperature—or try individual recipes as inspiration for a looser, alfresco feast. A few tips for warm-weather dining:

- Use greens that are less likely to wilt, like hearty watercress (see recipe, left), and serve the dressing on the side. Slaws work well, too.
- For any buffet with buns: Put bottoms before the meat on the table, tops after. It will keep the line moving.
- Before the meal, wrap dishes like a caterer: Set a platter on a piece of plastic wrap twice the size of the dish; pull up and over. Cut open with scissors. (No wrap wrestling.)
- Set a small fan at the end of the food table to blow off bugs.

SWAP OUT STONE FRUITS

Try hybrid and heirloom varieties, like pluots and apriums (!).

ALL-AMERICAN PICNIC

From two-bite deviled eggs to fried chicken sandwiches, this is one packable, portable, utensil-optional feast—great for the beach or a park. Just bring extra napkins.

PINK LEMONADE SANGRÍA

Boil 1/3 cup each sugar and water to dissolve the sugar; cool. Stir with 2 cups fresh lemon juice (from about 6 lemons), one 750-milliliter bottle dry rosé wine (look for a Côtes du Rhône), 1/2 cup brandy, 1/4 cup fresh tangerine or orange juice, 2 tablespoons Campari, and 1 each sliced lemon, tangerine or orange, and lime. Chill until cold. Stir in fresh mint, if desired, and pack in a travel pitcher. Serve over ice, topped with seltzer.

Cacio e pepe deviled eggs

HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **25 MINUTES**
SERVES **8**

- 8 large eggs
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan (1 ounce), plus more for garnishing
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon cracked black pepper
- Kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives (optional)

PLACE the eggs in a large saucepan and add enough cold water to cover by 1 inch. Bring to a boil. Immediately remove from heat, cover, and let stand for 10 minutes. Drain the eggs and run under cold water to cool.

PEEL the eggs and cut in half lengthwise. Scoop out the yolks and mash in a medium bowl with the mayonnaise, cheese, oil, pepper, and 1/4 teaspoon salt.

SPOON the yolk mixture into the egg whites. For an added (but not picnic essential) garnish, sprinkle with the chives and additional Parmesan.

Quick pickled crudités

HANDS-ON TIME: **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **2 HOURS, 20 MINUTES (INCLUDES PICKLING)**
SERVES **8**

- 2 cups distilled white vinegar
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 jalapeño, halved
- 1 tablespoon caraway seeds
- 2 small fennel bulbs, trimmed and cut into 1/4-inch-thick wedges
- 2 Kirby cucumbers, cut into sticks
- 3 medium carrots, cut into sticks
- 3 radishes, halved or quartered if large

BRING the vinegar, salt, sugar, garlic, jalapeño, caraway seeds, and 1 cup water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Simmer until the salt dissolves, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and let sit for 15 minutes.

POUR over the fennel, cucumbers, carrots, and radishes in a large bowl. Cool completely, stirring occasionally, about 2 hours. Refrigerate in a jar for up to 1 week.

MAKE IT, THEN MOVE IT
Get tips on how to (neatly) transport everything to your picnic site on the following pages.

Fried chicken biscuits

HANDS-ON TIME: **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **50 MINUTES**
SERVES **8**

- 2 8-ounce boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1 pound total), pounded 1/2 inch thick
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 5 tablespoons canola oil
- 8 large biscuits, split
- Mayonnaise, baby arugula, pickles, and hot sauce, for serving

COMBINE the chicken and buttermilk in a large resealable plastic bag. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Spread the panko on a plate.

REMOVE the chicken from the buttermilk and wipe off the excess. Season with 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper, then dredge in the panko to coat.

HEAT 3 tablespoons of the oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. Cook the chicken until golden on the bottom, about 3 minutes. Turn the chicken, add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, and cook until crisp and cooked through, about 3 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Cut into 8 pieces.

SPREAD the cut sides of the biscuits with mayonnaise. Sandwich with the chicken, arugula, pickles, and hot sauce.

Strawberry-thyme hand pies

HANDS-ON TIME: **30 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **2 HOURS (INCLUDES CHILLING)**
MAKES **8**

- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry (half of a 17.3-ounce package), thawed
- All-purpose flour, for dusting
- 8 ounces strawberries, chopped (1 1/2 cups)
- 1/2 teaspoon finely grated lime zest
- 1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 1/2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1/4 cup turbinado sugar

PLACE the puff pastry on a lightly floured sheet of parchment paper. Roll into a 12-inch square. Cut in half, then into 8 rectangles. Slide the parchment with the pastry onto a baking sheet.

TOSS the strawberries, lime zest, cornstarch, and granulated sugar in a medium bowl.

BRUSH the edges of each pastry rectangle with the egg. Dividing evenly, top half of each rectangle with the filling. Fold over and seal the pies. Brush the tops with the egg. Sprinkle with the thyme and turbinado sugar. Cut a few small slits in the top of each pie. Freeze for 30 minutes on the baking sheet (or up to 1 month in an airtight container).

HEAT oven to 400° F.

BAKE until golden brown, about 25 minutes. Cool to room temperature on a wire rack.

STACK SUPPLIES (GAMES, LINENS, MELAMINE PLATES, LIKE THE JOHN DERIAN ONES HERE) AND NON-COOLER FOODS FLAT IN A RECTANGULAR LAUNDRY BASKET.

PACKING POINTERS

Soft-sided coolers or insulated bags are easy to carry and keep food chilled until you set up. Put ice packs on top, not at the bottom, as cold air sinks.

EGGS
Nestle deviled eggs in a shallow, airtight container lined with a paper towel to prevent sliding. Fill extra space with paper towels so the eggs don't roll around. Put the lid on and top with plastic bags filled with ice.

SANGRÍA
Sandwich plastic pitchers of sangría and bottles of seltzer between bags of ice; use the ice for the drinks.

CRUDITÉS
Remove the vegetables from the brine before packing in a large zip-top bag (no stinky spills). But don't pour the brine down the drain! Save it and boil it again for another batch of pickles.

CHICKEN AND HAND PIES
Individually wrap the chicken biscuits and strawberry hand pies in waxed paper. (A piece of tape will keep them closed.) They'll be easier to carry, hand out, and eat.

G.Y.O. COOKOUT

At a grill-your-own gathering, guests bring their favorite proteins (or vegetables), and grilling becomes part of the festivities. You provide the versatile sides. These go with everything from salmon to steak.

Charred broccoli guacamole

HANDS-ON TIME: **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **40 MINUTES**
SERVES **10**

- 1 large bunch broccoli, cut into large florets
- 2 jalapeños, halved
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 ripe avocados, pitted and peeled
- 1/2 cup chopped red onion
- 3/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- Tortilla chips, for serving

HEAT grill to medium. Once it's hot, clean the grill grate with a wire brush.

TOSS the broccoli and jalapeños with the oil in a large bowl. Grill, turning occasionally, until tender and lightly charred, about 20 minutes. Cool, then finely chop.

MASH the avocados with the onion, cilantro, lime juice, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in a large bowl. Fold in the chopped broccoli and jalapeños. Serve with the tortilla chips.

Grilled corn on the cob with Feta and chives

HANDS-ON TIME: **30 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **30 MINUTES**
SERVES **10**

- 5 ears of corn, shucked and halved crosswise
- Olive oil, for brushing
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 4 ounces Feta, finely crumbled (1 cup)
- 1/4 cup snipped fresh chives
- Hot sauce, for serving

HEAT grill to medium-high. Once it's hot, clean the grill grate with a wire brush.

BRUSH the corn with the oil and season each piece with 1/8 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Grill, turning occasionally, until the kernels are crisp-tender and lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes.

TRANSFER the corn to a platter and brush with the mayonnaise. Spread the Feta on a plate. Roll the corn in the Feta and sprinkle the chives on top. Serve with the hot sauce.

ULTIMATE MULTITASKING BARBECUE SAUCE

Whisk 1 minced clove garlic with 1/2 cup each barbecue sauce, apple cider vinegar, and olive oil in a large bowl. Use as a marinade or sauce for grilled meats and vegetables or as a bold salad dressing. Makes 1 1/4 cups.

TENDING BAR

Guests who don't cook can watch the ice supply and mix simple cocktails—two ingredients max (like gin and tonics).

Rice and snap pea salad with mangoes

HANDS-ON TIME: **35 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **1 HOUR**
SERVES **10**

- 2 cups basmati rice
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 3/4 pound snap peas, sliced
- 2 mangoes, chopped
- 1 1/4 cups fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- 1 small red onion, sliced
- Chopped roasted almonds, for serving (optional)

BRING the rice, 3 1/2 cups water, and 1/2 teaspoon salt to a boil in a large saucepan. Stir once, cover, and simmer over low heat until the water is absorbed, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand for 15 minutes. Fluff with a fork and spread on a plate to cool quickly.

WHISK the olive oil, lime juice, cumin, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in a large bowl. Add the rice, snap peas, mangoes, cilantro, and red onion and toss well. Top with the almonds, if desired.

Tres leches trifle with raspberries

HANDS-ON TIME: **30 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME: **2 1/2 HOURS (INCLUDES CHILLING)**
SERVES **10**

- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk
- Kosher salt
- 3 cups raspberries (12 ounces)
- 1 cup milk
- 1 12- to 16-ounce store-bought pound cake, cut crosswise into 6 slices

BEAT the heavy cream, sweetened condensed milk, and a pinch of salt with an electric mixer until firm peaks form. Roughly chop 2 cups of the raspberries and fold them into the whipped cream mixture.

POUR the milk into a shallow bowl. Dip 2 of the cake slices in the milk and arrange on the bottom of a 2-quart (8-inch round) terrine dish or glass bowl, cutting them to fit. Spoon a third of the whipped cream mixture on top. Repeat the layering 2 more times. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours. Top the cake with the remaining 1 cup of whole raspberries.

GROUP GRILLING TIPS

No fighting over the KISS THE COOK apron, OK?

PICK A GRILL MASTER
Designate someone to stay by the grill and keep it clean, hot, and ready for each batch of food. She should also keep grill tools and serving platters on hand.

BORROW COOLERS
Have two filled with ice next to the grill so that the meat stays chilled until it's time to cook. Place seafood directly on ice.

SET A SCHEDULE
To ensure a steady flow of food, give guests an approximation of when they will be up to grill. Folks with vegetables or tofu should go first if they want to avoid mingling with meat.

PLAY IT SAFE
Don't assume that everyone is a pro. Keep a spray bottle with water handy for flare-ups.

LEAVE A DISH OF BARBECUE VINAIGRETTE BY THE GRILL FOR BASTING AND ONE ON THE TABLE FOR TOPPING SALAD AND SIDES.

UNFIXABLE

THE AUTHOR'S ADOPTED PET WOULDN'T COTTON TO THE RULES OF OUR CAN-DO CULTURE. AND SHOULDN'T THAT BE OK?

Written by J.I. Baker
Illustration by Olaf Hajek

"HE ONLY HAS AN HOUR TO LIVE!" the post on Facebook read, showing a defeated-looking dog tied to a cord in a sterile room at Manhattan animal control, a kill shelter. His eyes were red and puffy, and he looked worse than terrified—he looked dead. "If we can't find a foster for this sad old man NOW, he will be euthanized. PLEASE HELP!"

There are pleas like this from animal-rescue organizations posted every minute, and most are ignored. Almost 2.5 million healthy cats and dogs are killed in the United States every year. But the lost look in this dog's eyes overwhelmed me. Was I more emotional than usual, thanks to too many beers the night before? Did I somehow see myself in this abandoned beast? Whatever the reason, I called the number and said I would foster him.

The dog in question, a nine-year-old pit-bull mix named Buster, had been dumped by the family that had owned him. They'd had him for seven years but couldn't, in the end, handle his health prob-

lems, which were no doubt inflamed by the fact that he had been left alone in a garage for 16 hours a day. (They were "busy," of course.)

Buster had severe arthritis and could hardly walk. His body was covered in a rash that he scratched and licked until it bled. He had chronic ear infections. He had serious allergies. He snuffled and snorted and wheezed and coughed. Worst of all, he was depressed, almost catatonic. Because of all this—and more—Buster had been rejected not only by his family but also by seven foster homes in two weeks.

No one wanted him. The truth is, I didn't, either—I had only planned to foster him for a short while—but once he was in our house, I couldn't imagine becoming just another person who had let him down, surrendering him to a system that would destroy him. More than this, my partner and I bonded over the belief that endless love and patience would turn Buster around.

We were not alone in this. When friends saw my Facebook posts about Buster, now renamed Willie, they happily offered many "surefire" recommendations. All I needed to do, they said, was read *Cesar's Way,* by "the Dog Whisperer"! (We had.) Keto-Chlor shampoo would heal his sores. (It didn't.) Burt's Bees Calming Spray for dogs would cheer him up. (No luck.) Another friend said that Willie's problems were psychosomatic. In fact, his own rescued pit bull had blossomed from a sick wreck into a healthy, active dog in six months. "It won't be long before you have a houseful of torn shoes and muddy furniture," he said. "But the love that you'll get in return will make it all worth it!"

Neither the torn shoes nor the love ever materialized. Instead, Willie got worse—much worse. After endless, expensive rounds of vet visits and drugs, some of his health problems improved, but severe mental troubles emerged. Willie went from being catatonic to jumping in fear, as if shocked, every five minutes—even when he slept. There were only two things he liked (breakfast and dinner). Everything else terrified him (the basement, windows, rain, knapsacks, pens, glasses, computers, cords, brooms, cell phones, paper, cans, water, dishes, wallpaper, books). He didn't understand affection—every touch made him jump. He didn't wag his tail. Instead, he paced the halls, shaking uncontrollably. He didn't bark, except while asleep, at some unseen menace in his dreams.

People kept asking, "How's Willie?"

"Still struggling," I would say.

But this was clearly not what anyone wanted to hear, and it was always followed by advice that, though well-meaning, implied that we weren't trying hard enough, or weren't trying the right things. Again, I was told what to do: Cesar Millan's techniques, as it turned out, were "wrong"—no wonder we still had problems! We should be using Ian Dunbar's *Sirius Adult Dog Training* DVD instead! Had we tried Prozac? (Yes.) A neurologist? (Yes.) Did we put him in a "calming" cage? (Yes. It terrified him.) Had we tried an animal behaviorist? (Not yet.)

So we did. The animal behaviorist showed up bearing brain-enhancing toys, treats made of lamb lung, and charts showing how canine emotions are reflected by posture.

"Are you disciplining Willie?" she asked us.

"For what?"

"Digging, chewing."

"He hardly leaves his bed."

"Do you take him for walks?"

"He won't walk. You have to drag him."

"Let's take him for a walk," she said sternly, clearly knowing more than we did. But when she put the leash on Willie and tried to pull him from his hiding spot behind the bed, he collapsed into the dead weight of his 55 pounds, eyes rolling back, convulsing in fear. After 30 minutes, when the behaviorist finally gave up, she left us with a freshly traumatized dog, a bill for $250, and a diagnosis: Willie was alone too much. So we upped our four-times-a-day dog walker to five. ("Walker" is, in this case, a misnomer.) But Willie never changed.

This past Christmas, after we'd had Willie for about a year, he was given a plush toy that sent him over the edge. Stepping on it late one night, he was horrified to discover that the toy squeaked. He scuttled away from it, heading to the door—not unusual, because that's what he does when he needs to pee. But when I opened the door, he bolted, fueled by fear. It was the first time I'd ever seen Willie run (and the last, in fact). Wearing nothing but underwear, I chased after him. I was in a neighbor's driveway pulling him by the collar back into the street just when a car rolled in, headlights illuminating a half-naked man with a shaking dog.

"You shouldn't let him out without a leash," a friend said after I told her the story.

"He always goes out without a leash, because he never runs away."

"But he did, didn't he?" she said. "What kind of leash do you use?"

I said nothing, because I knew she would tell me that we had been using the wrong leash, and that if only we had used the Gentle Leader Headcollar, and read the "Fearful Dogs" blog, and played Beethoven when we left the house, we wouldn't be having these problems.

"Americans just want to fix things," a French friend of mine once said. Maybe this is because we think we can—or because we think that all things are, in essence, fixable. The belief in transformation is built into our culture, hardwired into both our mindsets and reality TV. It is the subject of every self-help book, the underpinning of every psychotherapy session, and the source of all the tears on *The Biggest Loser.*

But life is not a broken toaster, and neither is a damaged dog.

As I write this, Willie lies where he always lies, on the blanket near the bed. In his dreams, he is barking at the fears he can't confront in life. And he is snuffling and snorting the way he will always snuffle and snort. We dearly love our sad old man, but makeovers don't always work, things don't always change—and sometimes the only thing you can fix is your perspective. ■

fine lines

Modern materials, like vinyl cording and galvanized metal, give loungey pieces a luxe look. Try a molded white chair on a patio or a pair of them flanking a console in a foyer. Painted metallic styles can beautify a garden or even a family command center. Topped with a tray, a hot-hued ottoman makes a high-impact outdoor side table. (Alternative use, without the tray: spunky seat in a kid's room.)

THE FARMHOUSE CHAIR
in orange galvanized iron (22 by 34½ by 25 inches), $480, bendgoods.com.

ADELAIDE BISTRO COLLECTION CHAIR
in eucalyptus wood (24 by 34 by 23 inches), $319; and table in laminate and eucalyptus wood (27 by 30 inches), $519: boconcept.com.

OUTSIDE IN

Today's backyard furniture is far from garden variety: durable enough to withstand the elements but stylish enough to spend the off-season in your living room (or kitchen).

Photographs by David Prince
Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller

THE CAPTAIN CHAIR
in gold galvanized iron (16½ by 29 by 16½ inches), $480, bendgoods.com.

ADAM OTTOMAN
in turquoise vinyl cord with white steel base or pink vinyl cord with black steel base (21 by 15 by 16 inches), $250, shophorne.com.

tip-top shape

Angular silhouettes and architectural details take all-weather chairs to new heights. A metal cutout style glams up a poolside bar or a kitchen counter; a sleek teak seat is equally at home on a deck and in a dining room. Striking, sculptural tables elevate any entertaining area, indoors or out.

OCTAHEDRON TABLES
Top: Large pedestal in cobalt blue powder-coated steel (16 by 12 inches), $165. Center: Side table in vermilion (24 by 17 inches), $300. Bottom: Coffee table in hammertone white (36 by 14 inches), $499. All at erictrine.com.

HOT MESH BAR STOOL
in off-white powder-coated steel (20 by 41 by 22 inches), $199. Far right: Hot Mesh chair in natural yellow (19 by 30½ by 21 inches), $129. Both at bludot.com.

GRINDA ARMCHAIR in teak and steel (25 by 32 by 20½ inches), $1,368 for two, allmodern.com.
PEBBLE COFFEE TABLE in concrete (36 by 14 by 24 inches), $299, westelm.com.

at your service

A neutral, curvy stool is the ultimate go-anywhere piece (from entryway accent to back-porch perch). Flat-top versions double as side tables and plant stands. Want to perk up your patio or living room? A citrusy bar cart does both.

MARTINI SIDE TABLE in white aluminum (also shown in antique brass aluminum, far right; 15 by 16½ inches), $149, westelm.com.

COBBLER BAR STOOL in oak and teak (18 by 18 by 13 inches), $369, wayfair.com/RSstool.

LUXEMBOURG BAR TROLLEY in verbena aluminum (36 by 26 by 19 inches), $950, yliving.com.

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Food

Quick Cooking (138, 139, 142, 155, 158, 161, 164)
Healthy Pick (138, 142, 158, 161, 164)
Freezable (138, 139, 160)
Make Ahead (138, 139, 142, 160)
Big Batch (138, 139, 142)
One Pot (139)
Whole-Grain (138, 142, 158)
Vegetarian (138, 139, 142, 158, 164)
Gluten-Free (138, 139, 142, 156, 160, 161, 164)

A CUP OF COOKED YELLOW SQUASH DELIVERS **35%** OF YOUR DAILY RECOMMENDED VITAMIN C.

OPPOSITES ATTRACT FETA'S SALTINESS, WHICH COMES FROM ITS BRINE, PAIRS WELL WITH SWEET SUMMER MELONS AND TOMATOES. (SEE PAGE 158.)

BABY SOFT
Why is the skin of new potatoes so tender? Most potatoes spend extra time in the ground and in storage to develop tougher skins. But new potatoes are picked early and go straight to the market from the field.

RED HOTS
These are cayennes, but any long, spicy chilies (Fresnos, serranos) you find in the supermarket will add a kick to stir-fries (page 155).

Photographs by Christopher Testani
Food Styling by Maggie Ruggiero

SET DESIGN BY JEFFREY W. MILLER

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Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

1

Steak stir-fry with snap peas, bok choy, and basil

HANDS-ON TIME **30 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 1 pound flank steak
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- Kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 3 baby bok choy, quartered lengthwise
- ½ pound snap peas, halved
- 1 bunch scallions, sliced, white and green parts separated
- 1 fresh hot red chili, sliced
- 3 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- Cooked white rice and fresh basil leaves, for serving

CUT the steak into thin slices across the grain, then cut into 2-inch lengths. Toss with the cornstarch and ¾ teaspoon salt in a medium bowl. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Stir-fry the steak, in 2 batches, until well browned (but not cooked through), 4 to 5 minutes per batch, adding 1 more tablespoon of the oil between batches. Transfer the steak to a plate; reserve the skillet.

REDUCE heat to medium. Add the remaining tablespoon of oil to the skillet. Add the bok choy. Cook, stirring occasionally, until crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the snap peas, scallion whites, and chili. Stir-fry until fragrant, about 1 minute.

ADD the steak, soy sauce, brown sugar, and 3 tablespoons water to the skillet. Cook, tossing frequently, until everything is coated with the sauce, 2 to 3 minutes.

SERVE over the rice, topped with the scallion greens and basil.

Recipes by
Chris Morocco

- Quick Cooking
- Healthy Pick
- Freezable
- Make Ahead
- Big Batch
- Slow Cooker
- One Pot
- Whole-Grain
- Vegetarian
- Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

2

Chicken thigh cutlets with zucchini, celery, and olive salad

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 2 zucchini (about 1 pound), thinly sliced lengthwise or shaved with a vegetable peeler
- 2 celery stalks, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley leaves
- 1/4 cup pitted oil-cured black olives, halved
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1/4 cup shaved Parmesan
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, pounded 1/4 inch thick

COMBINE the zucchini, celery, parsley, olives, lemon juice, 3 tablespoons of the oil, and 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper in a large bowl. Let sit for 5 minutes to allow the vegetables to soften slightly. Top with the Parmesan.

MEANWHILE, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Season the chicken with 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Cook, in 2 batches, until browned and cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to serving plates. Add the lemon slices to the skillet and cook just until browned and softened, about 1 minute.

TOP the cutlets with the lemon slices and serve with the salad.

FOOD

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4%	Hand-blown glass
89.5%	Tastes the same as tap water

MADE WITH	
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EASY DINNER

3

Greek salad tartines with white beans

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

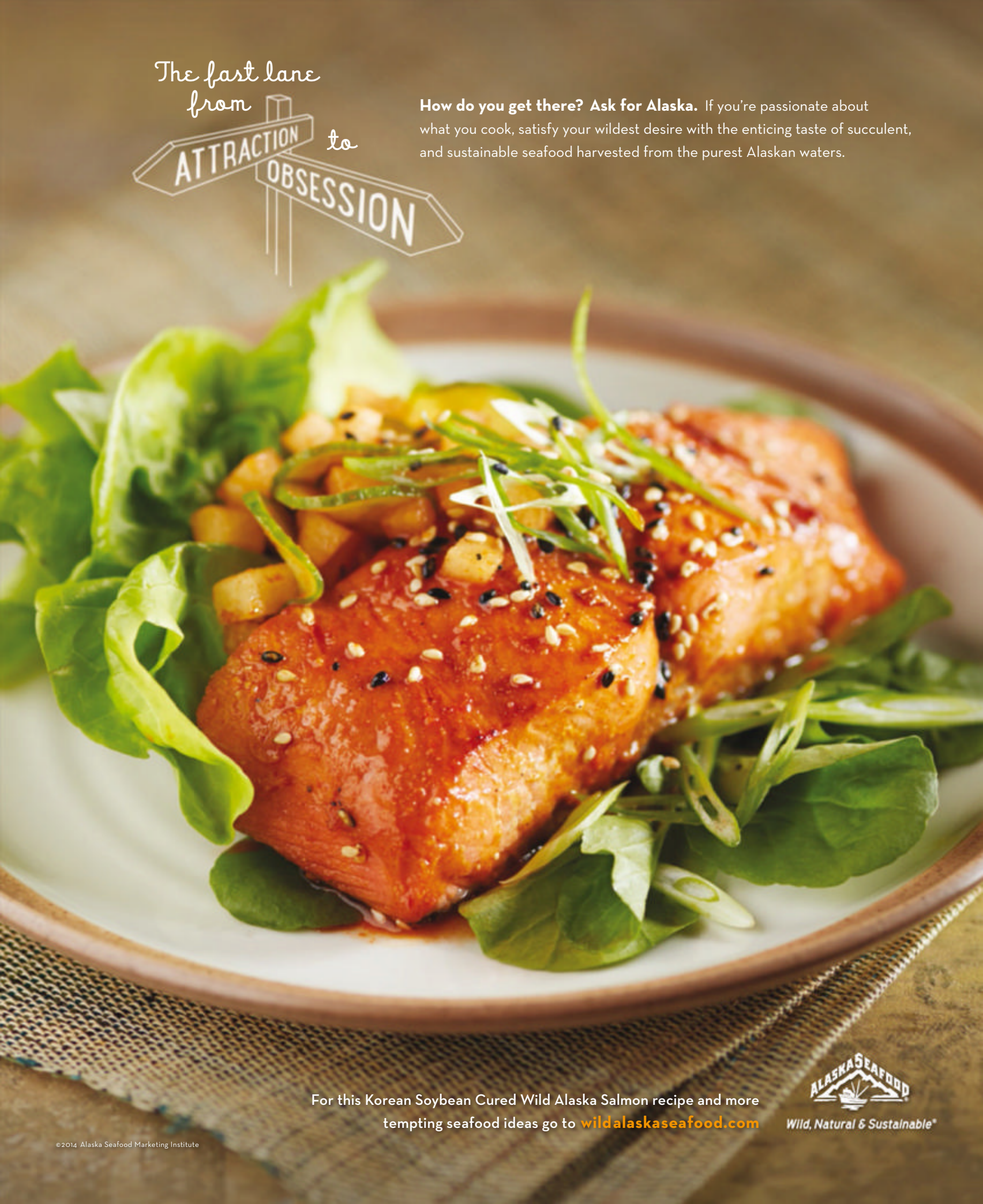
- 1 pound cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 baby cucumbers, halved lengthwise and sliced into half-moons
- 1/4 small red onion, sliced
- 2 tablespoons capers
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 15.5-ounce can cannellini beans, rinsed
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 4 thick slices whole-grain country bread, toasted
- 2 ounces Feta, crumbled (about 1/2 cup)

COMBINE the tomatoes, cucumbers, onion, capers, 2 tablespoons of the oil, 2 tablespoons of the vinegar, and 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Let sit for 10 minutes to allow the vegetables to absorb the flavors.

MEANWHILE, toss the beans with the parsley, 1 tablespoon of the oil, the remaining tablespoon of vinegar, and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper.

DRIZZLE the toasts with the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil. Divide the tomato mixture among the toasts and top with the Feta.

SERVE the toasts with the bean salad.



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For this Korean Soybean Cured Wild Alaska Salmon recipe and more tempting seafood ideas go to **wildalaskaseafood.com**

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- Healthy Pick
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- One Pot
- Whole-Grain
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EASY DINNER

4

Summer vegetable soup with pork and ricotta meatballs

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **45 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup ricotta
- 2 ounces Parmesan, grated (about 1/2 cup)
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 pound ground pork
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 pound green beans, trimmed and chopped
- 1 yellow squash, chopped
- 1 small bunch spinach, thick stems removed and leaves chopped
- Pesto, for serving

HEAT broiler. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.

COMBINE the eggs, ricotta, Parmesan, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in a bowl. Add the pork and gently mix with your hands until just combined. Form the mixture into 16 meatballs (about 2 tablespoons each). Broil on the prepared baking sheet, turning once, until browned and partly cooked through, 6 to 8 minutes.

MEANWHILE, bring the chicken broth to a simmer over medium-high heat. Add the green beans and squash and cook just until crisp-tender, 8 to 10 minutes.

ADD the meatballs and simmer until cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the spinach just until wilted.

SERVE drizzled with the pesto.

Quick Cooking
Healthy Pick
Freezable
Make Ahead
Big Batch
Slow Cooker
One Pot
Whole-Grain
Vegetarian
Gluten-Free

EASY DINNER

5

Salmon, potato, and arugula salad with dill dressing

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

- 1 pound new potatoes (about 12)
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 6-ounce pieces boneless, skinless salmon
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 anchovies
- 1 small clove garlic
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh dill
- 1 bunch arugula

STEAM the potatoes in 1/2 inch of water until tender, 16 to 18 minutes; drain.

MEANWHILE, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Season the salmon with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Cook until opaque throughout, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Break into large chunks.

USING the flat side of a chef's knife, mash the anchovies and garlic into a paste on a cutting board. Combine with the lemon juice and the remaining 4 tablespoons of oil in a small bowl. Season with 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Stir in the dill.

TOSS the arugula and potatoes with half the dressing. Divide the salad among 4 plates and top with the salmon. Drizzle with the remaining dressing.

NUTRITION
Get details on fat, calories, and sodium at the bottom of each recipe on RealSimple.com.

Treat Eggs to a Morning Wake Up Call.

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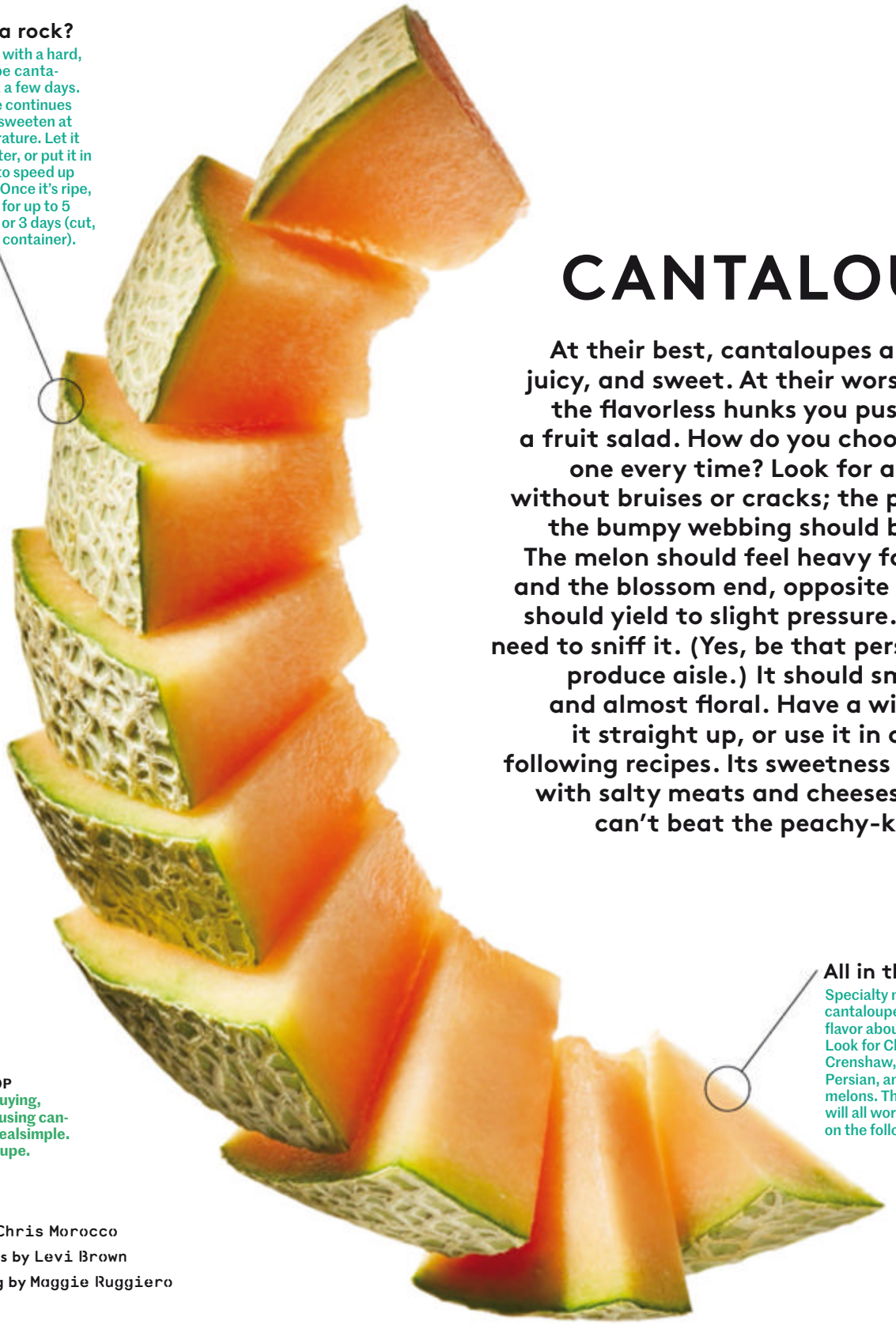
CANTALOUPE

At their best, cantaloupes are tender, juicy, and sweet. At their worst, they're the flavorless hunks you push aside in a fruit salad. How do you choose a good one every time? Look for a taut rind without bruises or cracks; the peel under the bumpy webbing should be golden. The melon should feel heavy for its size, and the blossom end, opposite the stem, should yield to slight pressure. Also, you need to sniff it. (Yes, be that person in the produce aisle.) It should smell sweet and almost floral. Have a winner? Eat it straight up, or use it in one of the following recipes. Its sweetness pairs well with salty meats and cheeses, and you can't beat the peachy-keen color.



Solid as a rock?

If you end up with a hard, not-quite-ripe cantaloupe, give it a few days. A cantaloupe continues to ripen and sweeten at room temperature. Let it sit on a counter, or put it in a paper bag to speed up the process. Once it's ripe, refrigerate it for up to 5 days (whole) or 3 days (cut, in an airtight container).

All in the family

Specialty melons with cantaloupe-like flesh and flavor abound in summer. Look for Charentais, Crenshaw, gaya, hami, Persian, and Sharlyn melons. These varieties will all work in the recipes on the following page.

EXTRA SCOOP
Get tips on buying, storing, and using cantaloupes at realsimple.com/cantaloupe.

Recipes by Chris Morocco
Photographs by Levi Brown
Food Styling by Maggie Ruggiero

1

Vietnamese pork chops with cantaloupe and basil salad

Combine 2 Tbsp. each **RICE VINEGAR** and **SOY SAUCE** and 2 tsp. each **FISH SAUCE** and **BROWN SUGAR.** Add 4 bone-in **PORK CHOPS.** Let marinate for 30 minutes. Season with **SALT** and **PEPPER.** Grill until cooked through, 3 to 4 min. per side. Toss 4 cups chopped **CANTALOUPE** (from 1/2 melon), 1/2 **CUCUMBER** (chopped), 1 cup **BASIL,** 2 Tbsp. fresh **LIME JUICE,** and 1/2 tsp. salt. Serve with the chops. SERVES **4.**

2

Cantaloupe cooler

Puree 4 cups chopped **CANTALOUPE** (from 1/2 melon), 1 cup **COCONUT WATER,** and 2 Tbsp. fresh **LIME JUICE** in a blender until smooth. Pour over **ICE,** garnish with **FRESH MINT,** and serve immediately. SERVES **4.**

3

Cantaloupe-berry vanilla ice cream bowl with olive oil

Combine the scraped seeds from 1/2 **VANILLA BEAN** with 2 Tbsp. **OLIVE OIL,** 1 tsp. **SUGAR,** and a pinch of **SALT.** Toss with 1/2 pound **BLACKBERRIES.** Let sit for 10 min. Divide the berries and 4 cups balled **CANTALOUPE** (from 1/2 melon) among 4 serving bowls. Top each serving with a scoop of **VANILLA ICE CREAM** and drizzle with **OLIVE OIL.** SERVES **4.**

4

Cantaloupe skewers with lime zest and chili powder

Cut 6 **CANTALOUPE** wedges in half crosswise. Insert a skewer in each. Combine 1 Tbsp. finely grated **LIME ZEST,** 1 tsp. **CHILI POWDER,** and 1/2 tsp. **SALT.** Sprinkle the mixture over the skewers. SERVES **4.**

5

Pasta salad with cantaloupe, Feta, and dill

Combine 4 cups cubed **CANTALOUPE** (from 1/2 melon), 1/4 cup chopped fresh **DILL,** 3 Tbsp. **OLIVE OIL,** 2 Tbsp. **SHERRY VINEGAR,** and **SALT** and **PEPPER.** Let sit for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, cook 1/2 lb. **ORECCHIETTE** according to the package directions. Rinse under cold water until cool and drain well. Toss with the cantaloupe. Top with 1/3 cup crumbled **FETA** just before serving. SERVES **4.**

6

Cantaloupe prosciutto plate

Combine 2 Tbsp. **OLIVE OIL,** 2 Tbsp. **WHITE WINE VINEGAR,** 1 Tbsp. chopped **GOLDEN RAISINS,** 2 tsp. **HONEY,** and **SALT** and **PEPPER.** Toss with 1 sliced **RED CHILI PEPPER.** Drizzle over 8 slices of **PROSCIUTTO** and 8 slices of **CANTALOUPE** (from 1/2 melon). Top with fresh **MINT.** SERVES **4.**

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REAL SIMPLE
ROAD TEST
2015

THE BEST NONDAIRY FROZEN TREATS

Why buy the cow when you can get milk-free? These surprisingly rich sweets licked 67 competitors.

1 BEST VANILLA
Amy's Organic Vanilla Non-Dairy Frozen Dessert
The vanillas we tested tended to be icy. But this classic, made with coconut milk and speckled with vanilla bean, was soft and creamy.
TO BUY: $7 for 16 ounces, at grocery stores.

2 BEST MINT CHOCOLATE CHIP
Amy's Organic Mint Chocolate Chip Non-Dairy Frozen Dessert
A fresh peppermint flavor from an organic extract plus large dark-chocolate chunks set this coconut-milk mix apart from the other, artificial-tasting options.
TO BUY: $6 for 16 ounces, at grocery stores.

3 BEST PEANUT BUTTER
So Delicious Dairy Free Frozen Dessert Peanut Butter Zig Zag
Every bite of this decadent soy-milk chocolate winner is packed with chocolate shavings and peanut-butter ribbons.
TO BUY: $6 for 16 ounces, at grocery stores.

4 BEST TROPICAL
Luna & Larry's Coconut Bliss Pineapple Coconut
This champ tastes like a lickable piña colada—as if fresh pineapple (and, yes, rum!) had just been blended into a dense, creamy coconut treat.
TO BUY: $7 for 16 ounces, at grocery stores.

5 BEST CHOCOLATE
Luna & Larry's Coconut Bliss Dark Chocolate
So rich and smooth, this coconut-milk contender could cream even dairy-laden chocolates, testers declared.
TO BUY: $7 for 16 ounces, at grocery stores.

Written by
Heath Goldman
Photographs by
Danny Kim
Food Styling by
Victoria Granof

EASY TO ID
Want to see our winners in their packaging? Go to realsimple.com/dairyfree packaging.

1 BEST SANDWICH
So Delicious Dairy Free Frozen Dessert Coconut Milk Mini Coconut Sandwiches
Chewy chocolate cookies flank a dense coconut center (fewer drips!). Each of these chubby two-bite delights has only 100 calories.
TO BUY: $6 for eight 2.3-ounce bars, at grocery stores.

2 BEST FRUIT BAR
Julie's Organic Non-Dairy Vanilla Orange Bar
A favorite with kids, this coconut-cream–based pop reminded tasters of all ages of the classic Creamsicle.
TO BUY: $5.50 for four 3-ounce bars, at grocery stores.

3 BEST FUDGE BAR
So Delicious Dairy Free Frozen Dessert Coconut Milk Mini Fudge Bars
Unlike the competitors, these velvety treats really taste like cocoa—not the coconut-milk base. With plant-based compostable sticks, both licking and tossing can be guilt-free.
TO BUY: $6 for four 2.3-ounce bars, at grocery stores.

4 BEST CONE
Tofutti Yours Truly
Cue the ice cream truck jingle: This cone is filled with soy-based vanilla dipped in chocolate and sprinkled with chocolate cookie bits.
TO BUY: $6 for four 3.5-ounce cones, at grocery stores.

5 BEST COFFEE BAR
Luna & Larry's Organic Coconut Bliss Café Latte Bars
Tasters preferred this bar to any coffee in a carton. It's ultra-creamy and made with organic fair-trade coffee—the ideal pick-me-up on a hot summer day.
TO BUY: $6 for four 3-ounce bars, at grocery stores.

6 BEST CHOCOLATE-COVERED BAR
Luna & Larry's Organic Coconut Bliss Coconut Almond in Chocolate
This pick's almond-flecked shell snaps oh-so-satisfyingly when you bite it. And the interior, made with organic fair-trade coconut oil instead of coconut-milk solids, is thick and lush, with a fresh coconut flavor.
TO BUY: $6 for three 3-ounce bars, at grocery stores.

GRILL TIP:

Chicken was meant to soar. Brush on Kikkoman before and during grilling to add rich and savory flavor.

MARINATE ON THAT.

For sizzling summer recipes, visit KikkomanUSA.com/Grill

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Credits

FIND OUT WHERE TO BUY ITEMS FEATURED IN THE ISSUE.

page 130

Easy DIY Gallery Walls

Page 61, *from left: Minimalist Sea,* by Vicky Gu, $81 (24 by 18 inches), minted.com. *Nonsensical Infographic No. 2,* by Chad Hagen, $1,200 (24 inches square); *Old Flip Clock,* by Todd McLellan, $24 (10 by 8 inches): 20x200.com. *Boxhome,* by Todd St. John, $50 (16 by 20 inches), dwell.com. *The Suspensions of Physics Necessary for All Athletic Endeavors,* by Colin Blakely, $24 (8½ by 11 inches), 20x200.com. **Page 62,** *from left (blue and gold): Vintage Spools,* by Jennifer Steen Booher, $20 (8 inches square), artfullywalls.com. *Tour Esso,* by Matthew Trygve Tung, $240 (18 by 26 inches), thetappancollective.com. *Passing Through,* by Ky Anderson, $240 (20 by 16 inches); *Every Outdoor Basketball Court in Manhattan,* by Jenny Odell, $60 (11 inches square): 20x200.com. *Distant Island Pier,* by Julia Contacessi, $60 (16 inches square), minted.com. *Lake Michigan, Chicago,* by Daniel Seung Lee, $240 (20 by 16 inches), 20x200.com. *House by the Water,* by Paul Klee, $40 (12 by 9 inches), art.com. *Churchill Gardens,* by Matthew Trygve Tung, $80 (9 by 12 inches), thetappancollective.com. *Natural Selections XIII,* by Jason Burch, $24 (8½ by 11 inches), 20x200.com. *House of Earth and Light,* by Andrew Holder, $50 (16 by 20 inches), dwell.com. *Blue Wash Blocks,* by Kelly Witmer, $35 (10 by 12 inches), artfullywalls.com. Zaha leather chair (21½ by 31¾ by 23 inches), $1,195, jaysonhome.com. **Page 64,** *clockwise from top left (pink): New York,* by Max Wanger, $125 (16 by 24 inches), maxwangerprintshop.com. *Paper Planes (Pink),* by Rankin Willard, $77 (24 by 20 inches), artfullywalls.com. *Botanical,* by Liza Hathaway Matthews, $61 (20 by 16 inches), artfullywalls.com. *Carnival, #3,* by David Arnoux, $175 (16 by 20 inches), ugallery.com. *Warm Geos,* by Britt Bass Turner, $54 (16 inches square), artfullywalls.com. Maxime dining chairs in linen (20 by 37 by 23 inches), $1,400 each, jonathanadler.com. **Page 66,** *clockwise from top left (black and white): Noose,* by Elaina Sullivan, $61 (20 by 16 inches), artfullywalls.com. Artifact Uprising prints and wood cleat, $30 (11½ by 2 inches), artifactuprising.com. *34C,* $175 (18 by 24 inches), permanentpresseditions.com. *Planetary Neighbors,* by GeekInk Design, $63 (16 by 20 inches), minted.com. *Striped Suit,* by Faiths Designs, $81 (18 by 24 inches), minted.com. *The Lowdown,* by Karina Bania, $20 (8 inches square); *Porous #54,* by Eunice Kim, $20 (8 inches square); *Ruth,* by Tali Yalonetzki, $37 (10 by 14 inches): artfullywalls.com. Charpoy coffee table/bench (59 by 18 by 24 inches), $695, abchome.com.

The Best Fashion Advice of All Time

Page 105: Grace oxford shirt by Thomas Pink, $185, thomaspink.com. Emerson jeans by Citizens of Humanity, $258, citizensofhumanity.com. Cynthia Rybakoff gold-plated bar studs, $58, cynthiarybakoff.com. **Page 106:** Autumn Cashmere cashmere sweater, $332, Olive and Bettes, 212-579-2178. Suz Somersall gold-plated studs, $48, suzsomersall.com. **Page 108:** Zara printed top, $70, zara.com. Banana Republic printed pants, $98, bananarepublic.com. &Other Stories earrings, $45, stories.com. **Page 109:** The Row scuba-jersey dress, $590, net-a-porter.com. L.K.Bennett calf-hair clutch, $445, lkbennett.com. Banana Republic calf-hair pumps, $148, bananarepublic.com.

The Hot 100 for $100 or Less

Page 126: Mai Tai sunglasses by Knockaround, $20, knockaround.com. Flower Beauty Transforming Touch Powder-to-Crème Blush in Tickled Pink, $13, walmart.com. **Page 127:** Kenneth Cole perforated leather wedges, $79, dillards.com. Rebecca Minkoff leather envelope clutch, $95, rebeccaminkoff.com. **Page 128:** Essie Nail Polish in Blanc, $8.50, essie.com. NYC New York Color City Proof 24 Hr Waterproof Eye Shadow in Rockefeller Center Snowflakes, $3, walmart.com. Lydell NYC necklace, $92, lydellnyc.com. Tommy Hilfiger faux-leather espadrilles, $69, tommyhilfiger.com. GB by Gianni Bini top, $44, dillards.com. Eva Mendes for New York & Company skirt, $60, nyandcompany.com. Cooper & Ella snake-embossed top, $98, cooperandella.com. Guess rose-gold–tone ring with faux pearls, $18, guess.com. Lulu's faux-leather handbag, $36, lulus.com. Stila Jewel Eye Shadow in Opal, $20, stilacosmetics.com. NYX High Definition Finishing Powder in Translucent, $10, nyxcosmetics.com. NYX White Liquid Liner, $7, nyxcosmetics.com. MMS Design Studio metal clutch, $50, amazon.com. Miss Finch mesh skirt, $60, ideel.com. Knockaround matte sunglasses, $25, knockaround.com. Vanilla Beach bikini top, $25, and bottom, $20: target.com. Zara eyelet dress, $100, zara.com. Express leather watch, $88, express.com. Wennie sandals from Madison by Shoedazzle, $40, shoedazzle.com. Banana Republic jelly sandals, $60, bananarepublic.com. Sally Hansen I Heart Nail Art Pen in Pearly White, $6, sallyhansen.com. BCBG-MaxAzria peplum top, $98, nordstrom.com. **Page 129:** The Box Bag silver clutch, $99, theboxbag.com. Ted Baker sandals, $95, zappos.com. **Page 130:** Soludos cotton-jute espadrilles, $55, soludos.com. T.J.Maxx pants, $20, tjmaxx.com. Butter London Patent Shine 10X Nail Lacquer in Flusher Blusher, $18, butterlondon.com. Make Up For Ever Aqua Matic in I-20 Iridescent Turquoise, $21, sephora.com. T.J.Maxx blazer, $60, tjmaxx.com. Lancôme Blush Subtil Crème in Brise Rosee, $24, lancome-usa.com. Old Navy maxidress, $40, oldnavy.com. Urban Decay Revolution Lipgloss in Punch Drunk, Scandal, and Bittersweet, $22, urbandecay.com. The Limited printed top, $50, thelimited.com. Gilt faux-leather sandals, $99, gilt.com. Jewelry Habit necklace, $48, jewelryhabit.com. Express midi skirt, $80, express.com. Hollister Co. bikini top, $25, and bottom, $10: hollisterco.com. CoverGirl The Super Sizer Mascara by Lashblast in Very Black, $8, covergirl.com. Smashbox Be Legendary Lipstick in Fireball Matte, $20, smashbox.com. SpaRitual Nail Lacquer in Firefly, $8, sparitual.com. Oasis printed sandals, $62, oasis-stores.com. Merona blouse, $20, target.com. Bar III earrings, $30, macys.com. Izel necklace by Tommy Bahama, $78, tommybahama.com. Stephanie Johnson tote of raffia and faux leather, $85, stephaniejohnson.com. **Page 131:** Carolee resin bangle, $45, lordandtaylor.com. Anissa sandals from Scene by Shoedazzle, $40, shoedazzle.com. **Page 132:** Rituals Duo Eyeshadow in 11, $25, us.rituals.com. Coco Loves Rome earrings, $20, cocolovesrome.com. Bobbi Brown Shimmer Lip Gloss in Spun Gold, $25, bobbibrowncosmetics.com. Gap cotton shirtdress, $70, gap.com. Aerie paper hat, $25, aerie.com. Abercrombie & Fitch polyester-chiffon top, $38, abercrombie.com. Ann Taylor lace top, $59, anntaylor.com. See Eyewear sunglasses, $99, seeeyewear.com. Marshalls leather bucket bag, $40, marshallsonline.com for stores. Sunburst flats by Report Signature, $60, reportshoes.com. J.McLaughlin modal-cotton scarf, $85, jmclaughlin.com. Danielle Stevens Jewelry bracelet of glass and gold plate, $30, daniellestevens.com. Old Navy cotton-blend shorts, $30, oldnavy.com. Cost Plus World Market necklace of metal, suede, and acrylic, $15, worldmarket.com. Jamie pants by Darling, $88, darlingclothes.com. Clinique Chubby Stick Baby Tint Moisturizing Lip Color in Flowering Freesia, $17, clinique.com. Zara two-tone leather heels, $90, zara.com. Londontown lakur in Avon Gorge, $16, londontownusa.com. Vanilla Beach one-piece suit, $45, target.com. Loren Hope earrings of glass, Swarovski crystals, and brass, $58, lorenhope.com. 525 America viscose-cotton sweater, $78, 525america.com. Nila Anthony laser-cut clutch, $38, lulus.com. Clarins Instant Light Lip Balm Perfector in My Pink, $23, clarinsusa.com. Ann Taylor Luxe Solid Scarf, $39.50, anntaylor.com. Emi Jay pastel bows in Pistachio, Strawberry Sorbet, and Aquamarine, $14 each, emijay.com. **Page 133:** Ama patent-leather sandals by Charles David, $79, charlesdavid.com. Missguided quilted clutch, $36, misguidedus.com. **Page 134:** Banana Republic top, $60, bananarepublic.com. Boden floral sandals, $88, bodenusa.com. MAC Cosmetics Le Disko Dazzleshadow in She Sparkles, $21, maccosmetics.com. Ardency Inn Modster Smooth Ride Supercharged Eyeliner in Gold, $19, sephora.com. R.J. Graziano cuff, $35, rjgraziano.com. Galian faux-leather bag, $73, galian.com. H&M silk-blend dress, $70, hm.com. Pono by Joan Goodman resin bangles, $95 for set, ponobyjoangoodman.com. Circa Optical Illusion Lash Lengthening Mascara in Black, $11, walgreens.com. La Mer Collections rose-gold–tone watch, $98, lamercollections.com. Milani Baked Bronzer in Glow, $10, milanicosmetics.com. Erin McDermott agate necklace, $88, erinmcdermott.com. White House Black Market silk-blend shell, $94, whbm.com. BCBGeneration sandals, $79, zappos.com. Forever 21 faux-leather heels, $30, forever21.com. Scunci No Slip Grip All Day Hold bobby pins, $3.50 for 48, cvs.com. James Read BB Tan Pen, $30, anthropologie.com. Marshalls bag, $50, marshallsonline.com. OPI Nail Lacquer in Glitzerland, $10, ulta.com. Jewelry Habit gold-plated cuff, $30, jewelryhabit.com. **Page 135:** Adia Kibur gold-plated ring, $46, adiakibur.com. Nars Eye Paint in Interstellar and Iskandar, $25 each, narscosmetics.com.

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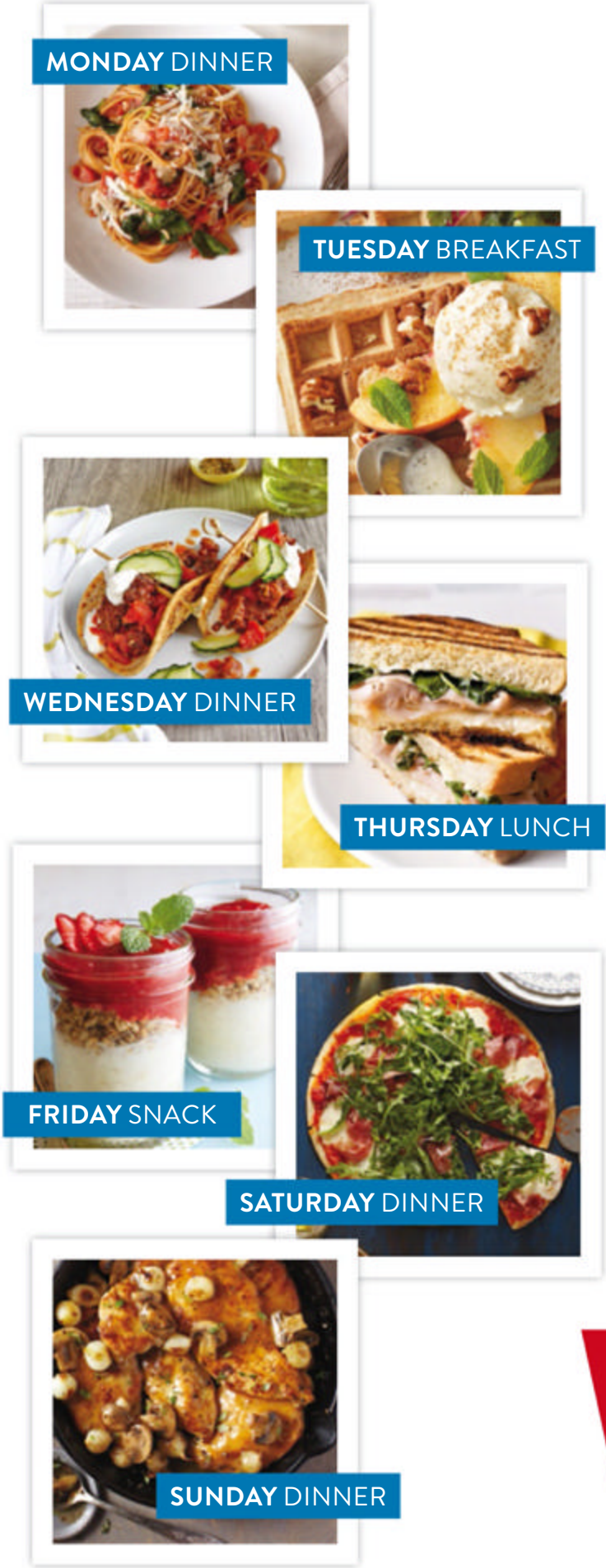

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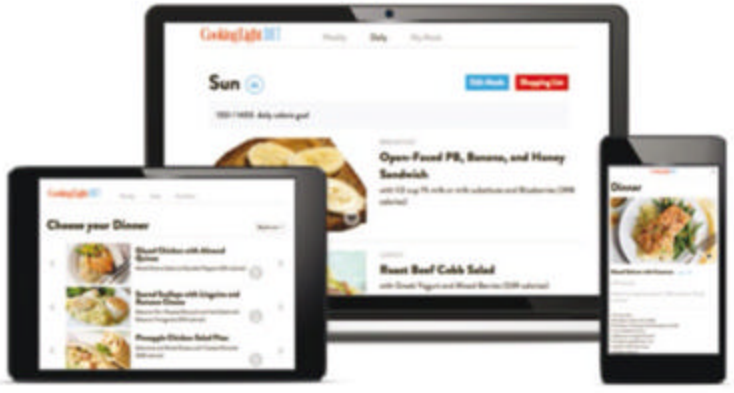

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A Life in Full

TO HELP TRANSITION FROM THE NEEDS OF HER PARISHIONERS TO THE NEEDS OF HER FAMILY, THIS MINISTER RELIES ON MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES AND A SENSE OF GRATITUDE.

FULL OF GRACE
"Everyone in the circle shares a 'joy of the week'—a place where she's seen God, from the sun shining to a grandkid's smile."

ERICA THOMPSON, 40
- Associate minister at Asylum Hill Congregational Church, in Hartford, Connecticut
- Married to Brian Thompson, with two daughters—Maya, six, and Noelle, four
- West Hartford, Connecticut

10:00 A.M. "Every Tuesday, I lead the women's prayer group. We'll discuss what's happening in Baltimore and Nepal or stuff we're struggling with closer to home. We end with a prayer."

12:30 P.M. "I'm meeting with Gwen Haley, chairperson of the women's spirituality and fellowship committee, to finalize room reservations and nitty-gritty details for next weekend's retreat."

THROUGH GOOD TIMES AND BAD
"I'm honored to be invited into the inner chambers of people's lives—both their happy moments and their sorrows."

SUNDAY BEST
"I'M WORKING ON MY SERMON IN MY HEAD ALL WEEK LONG. GETTING IT DOWN ON PAPER IS THE LAST PART OF THE PROCESS."

1:00 P.M. "I'm one of three ministers at the church, and each week we rotate different duties. I need to get all my ducks in a row because I'm leading this Sunday's worship service."

2:20 P.M. "I often visit church members going through a rough patch, like Jean Blanning, who's recovering from surgery. At times we pray. Other times I'll help them manage practical matters."

3:45 P.M. "Many nights I have meetings or events for work, so whenever I'm able, I carve out time to pick up the girls from school so we can hang out together in the afternoon."

5:15 P.M. "As a firefighter, my husband works 24-hour shifts. If we're both working, my parents, who live with us, help. I love that my kids have a close relationship with their grandparents."

Photographs by Emily Kinni

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